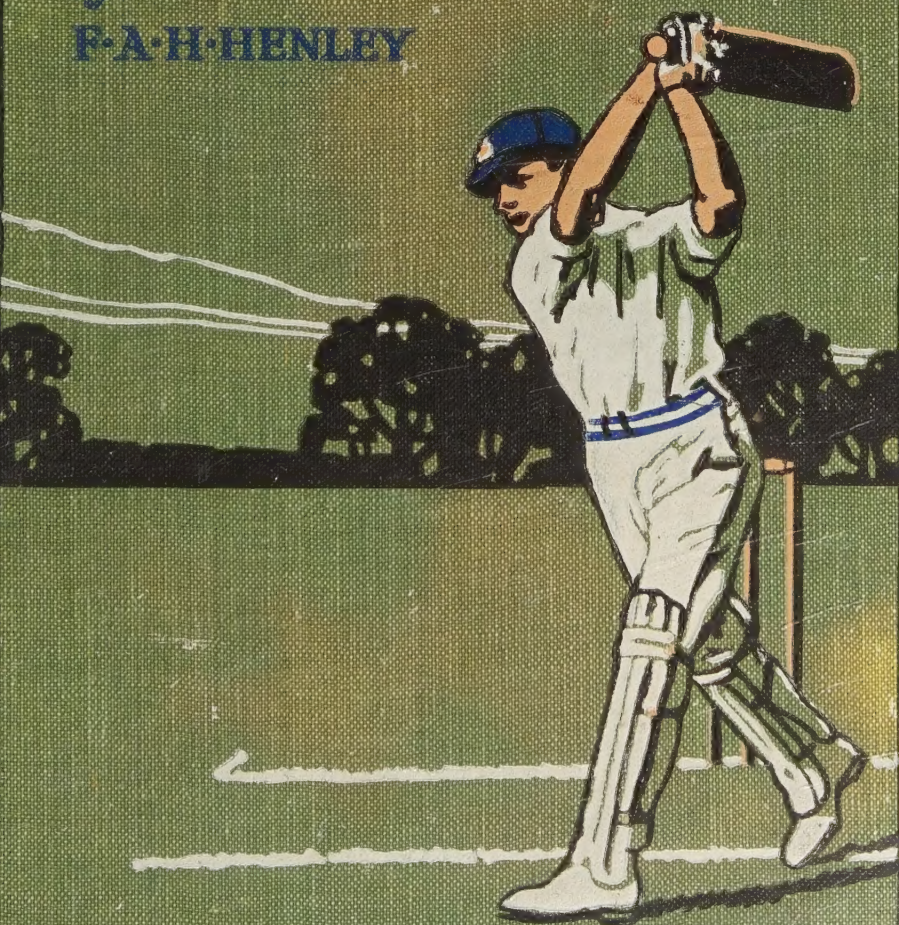


THE BOYS' BOOK OF CRICKET

by

F·A·H·HENLEY





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Roger Woolfitt

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Roger Woolfitt

THE BOYS'
BOOK OF CRICKET



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BY

F. A. H. HENLEY

WITH A FOREWORD BY

P. F. WARNER



LONDON

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FOREWORD

BY P. F. WARNER

MR F. A. H. HENLEY took part in the historic University match of 1905, and he has not failed to draw attention to the burning lesson which that match taught, viz. that it is essential to hold a "kit inspection" before an Eleven takes the field. Had such an inspection taken place, it is more than probable that Oxford would have won on that occasion.

Mr Henley is a close observer, and, I should imagine from his book, a most excellent and stimulating coach, who does not "fuss," and who realises that the fundamental principles of Cricket are but few in number, and that there is more danger in overcoaching than in too little coaching.

It is unnecessary to teach boys the refinements, so to speak, of the game : that will come later, with growth and experience ; but the great thing is to

allow boys to be natural in their style of play, and not to cramp or destroy their personality by endeavouring to turn out batsmen all on one pattern.

This is an age of machinery, but you cannot turn such a beautiful and subtle game as Cricket into an affair of machinery: temperament and psychology must be allowed free play.

Mr Henley writes in a manner which exudes the happy atmosphere of the cricket-field, and I read his book with great pleasure. The book should make a wider appeal than to masters and boys at Preparatory Schools, for whom it is primarily intended, for it will be welcomed, as well, at our Public Schools. Chapter XXI, entitled "Do's and Don'ts," might with advantage be framed and hung on the wall of every cricket pavilion throughout the British Empire.

Mr Henley played a few times for Middlesex, *me duce*. I wish he could have played more often, for he was a good, if unlucky, fast bowler, and he had, and of course still has, that true appreciation of the game which is worth more than all the runs and wickets in the world.

I wish his book every possible success.

April 1924.

PREFACE

IT has often struck me that while there are many books on Cricket at the present time which afford excellent instruction for boys of the Public School age, there are very few, if any, which are sufficiently elementary for the youngest cricketer to understand, and which may also be useful to those who have attained to the heights of the first game at their Preparatory Schools. In this little book I have therefore tried to point out what are, in my experience, the things which a would-be cricketer should learn to begin with, and also to add a few points which may help some of my readers when they face their coaches at their Public Schools.

The photographs will, I hope, help to explain the description of the majority of the most popular strokes more clearly. With this end in view, the batsman is, in certain cases, shown making the shots in a "right" and "wrong" way, the latter being an attempt to emphasise the most common faults in connection with them.

Since success at any game largely depends upon the position in which the feet are placed, chalk lines have been drawn at right angles to the stumps, in order that the points in relation to actual footwork may be more easily studied.

F. A. H. H.

April 1924.

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THE BOYS' BOOK OF CRICKET

CHAPTER I

EQUIPMENT

The Choice of a Bat. Your first wish will probably be to possess a bat of your own, and although you will not have much trouble nowadays in finding a good one, do not be in too great a hurry or it may not prove to be the treasured friend which it should. Remember that nearly every bat in a shop *looks* attractive ; but appearances are deceptive, and the bat which seems to be just the one you want may be totally unsuited to you. It may, for instance, be **too big** for you, or perhaps its **balance** in experienced hands would be pronounced poor. Take good advice, then, from someone whom you know, someone in whom you have confidence, and someone who has had experience in the matter, before you make your purchase, and ask for a **rubber handle** to be fitted before you make your final decision. This will help the bat to “come up” well, *i.e.* you will find it much easier to lift when you are making actual strokes. The ordinary black twine with which the

handle is bound is often sticky and makes a bat feel clumsy.

When you have decided which one you will buy, have the rubber handle **glued** down, or it will crinkle up or slip round in your hands when you make a stroke.

The Sizes of Bats. Perhaps it would be as well to remember that boys' bats are numbered 4, 5, and 6. Of these, 4 is the smallest. Beyond those marked 6 we come to the "Harrow" size, which is one between 6 and the full size. These numbers will be found stamped on the upper end of the handle.

Pads and Gloves. Being now the proud owner of a bat, your next thoughts will be directed towards buying pads and gloves. This will be fairly easy because it is largely a matter of getting those which fit you. Try them on then first, and see that you can **run** in the pads and that the gloves feel comfortable and are neither too tight nor too loose. Very likely the elastic round the wrists will have to be adjusted—or possibly your fingers may be too long for the gloves to cover your knuckle-joints.

The Object of Wearing Pads and Gloves. If you are wise you will never go out to bat without wearing both the pads **and** the gloves. You will probably always remember to put on the former,

because without them you would not consider yourself properly equipped. But that is not, of course, the main reason. Our shins and legs, and especially our knees, are very sensitive parts of our bodies. We all know that a negro is said to have a head like iron, but that he hates having his shins kicked. So it is with all of us. When we first begin to bat and see the ball coming at our legs or bodies, our *first* instinct is to try and avoid being hurt. When we have played a little longer our main object is to hit the ball—we put all idea of flinching out of our minds. In other words, it is the knowledge that we can put the bat against the ball, and that, should we miss it, our pads will save us from being hurt, which gives us courage. If, on the other hand, we go out to have a “knock” without pads—perhaps standing in front of a fence to save ourselves the trouble of running to fetch the ball should we miss it—that old feeling returns. We are inclined to think primarily of our legs, because we know that probably the ground is uneven and the ball will turn quickly and unexpectedly; we become acutely conscious that we have no pads on. Consequently, very little good—in fact *harm*—is done to our cricket. A crack on the knee-cap or under the knee gives us a sickening feeling, and since the knee plays such an important part in all games it requires

especial care. There are many athletes to-day who have had to give up energetic games owing to injuries to their knees.

If, then, it is so necessary to guard our legs, it is equally important to protect our hands. This is especially the case when the wicket is inclined to be bumpy or when the ball is coming off at different heights.

There are few things more painful than a blackened finger-nail or a bruised hand, and both of these and other injuries to the hands can often so easily be prevented by wearing a pair of well-padded gloves. Don't think it is "swank" to wear gloves except in a match. **It is folly not to wear them at practice, for this is the time when accidents chiefly happen.** Practice pitches are often not as good as match wickets—though they certainly should be—and you get all sorts of bowlers flinging balls down at you. Often they know less where the ball is going than you do, and so it is small wonder that trouble occurs to your hands if the wicket is a bad one and you haven't even taken the precaution of wearing your gloves.

Remember that a bruised hand means that you may not be able to hold a bat for days—perhaps weeks. If you are a bowler and it is your bowling hand which is hurt, you won't be able to hold the

ball ; and, in any case, you certainly won't be wanted to play, because you will be an absolute "passenger" in the field and lose many more runs than you could hope to make.

Watch any county team having a knock at the nets before a match. They go out wearing pads and gloves just as if they were going to bat in the middle, although the practice wickets may be as good as the pitch itself. Even if one of the bowlers takes a bat and says : "Just bowl me one or two," he always puts gloves on—a right-hand one at all events—in order to protect his bowling hand.

Footgear. Next for your footgear. I should suggest that you use **boots** instead of shoes ; because, for one thing, they will support your ankles ; and secondly, they will be much more comfortable to wear with pads than will shoes. As to whether they are made of brown leather or white buckskin you must decide for yourself. The former are perhaps more serviceable and do not show the dirt so plainly, while buckskin is apt to get cut rather easily and is a little trouble to keep clean. On the other hand, buckskin boots look smarter and are more comfortable, as the skin is softer than brown leather.

Whether you choose brown or white boots, you must have a good sole on them ; because, before you

go out to play, you must **have nails in them** to prevent you from slipping. You don't want great **long clumsy spikes**—nor yet a large number of little nails, as they will only get clogged with mud on a wet day. A few **medium-sized nails** in the places where you need them most—you will soon be able to tell where you need them chiefly, because you will wear them down sooner than the others and also you will feel they are holding you—will be all you want. But **be sure you inspect your boots and all your "kit" very carefully before a match.** Your pad straps may require sewing or an extra hole punched in them—the elastic of your gloves may need attention—or, more important still, perhaps your boots may want repairing or need fresh nails.

A Warning to Remember. 'This reminds me of an incident which occurred in the University match of 1905. Oxford held a lead of 101 on the first innings, and when Cambridge went in to bat a second time they lost six wickets for 77. Five of these were obtained by W. H. B. Evans, one of the finest all-round cricketers who ever played. The match seemed as good as over, for Cambridge had a distinct "tail," and, moreover, there were four batsmen of real "class" in the Oxford XI., while the rest had all made runs on occasions. But at

this point Evans burst one of his boots, and though another pair was found for him in someone else's bag, he could not bowl comfortably in them. Two Cambridge batsmen, Colbeck and MacDonnell, inspired by this piece of luck, hit the Oxford bowling all over the field, and eventually the Cambridge total reached 264. Oxford lost that match by 40 runs—but, in all probability, had that wretched boot been seen to before the match began, Oxford would have packed their bags all smiles by six p.m. on the second day. Let that incident be a lesson to remember, and—if you can afford it—I should advise you to have two pairs of boots and wear the second pair from time to time.

Clothes. As to your clothes—I must leave that to you, with this one piece of advice: have them loose and comfortable—shrunk kit looks bad, and also prevents you from making strokes with the maximum amount of ease and grace.

CHAPTER II

STANCE AT THE WICKET

Stance. The way in which you stand when you prepare to receive the ball depends largely upon what you feel is most natural to you. Some people have a more attractive-looking stance than others, certainly ; but provided that you feel (1) comfortable, (2) well-balanced, and (3) that you can make the strokes you want, I would not suggest your altering your natural stance. There is, however, one which, although it has become rather fashionable lately, I think you most certainly ought not to adopt. This is called the “**two-eyed**” stance, but I think a better name for it is the “**two-shouldered**” stance, and for this reason. In order to watch the bowler closely you must turn your head enough to let **both** eyes look at him. I am perfectly sure that all cricketers do this.

What then is this “two-shouldered” stance which is so much condemned ?

The Two-Shouldered Stance. It is when the

batsman stands "wide open," as it is called, *i.e.* with his left foot so far to "leg" and so far out of line with his right, that he is standing almost square to the bowler. Now this cannot be sound policy, because it is practically an impossibility, when you are in this position, to put your left leg suddenly and quickly **right across to the off side**, maintain your balance, and drive the ball with your left shoulder well over it. Try it and see. You can't get there quickly enough, can you ?

When the Australians came over here in 1922, they brought with them two very fast bowlers—Gregory and MacDonald. These two men had the majority of English batsmen at their mercy—partly because we had very few bowlers in England at that time who were really fast, and so our men were unaccustomed to their extra pace ; but more especially because most of them simply would not drive on the off side, and relied upon obtaining their runs on the leg.

An Old English Captain's Criticism. This naturally called forth much criticism from many, amongst whom were some who had previously represented England, and one of them, A. C. MacLaren, wrote an article headed, "How to beat the Australians." He said, in so many words, that when making a forward offensive stroke, **unless the**

PLATE I

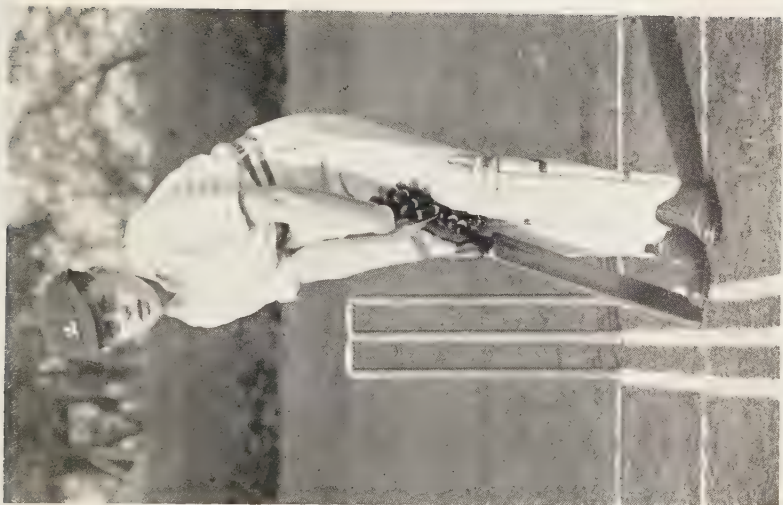
A. THE ORTHODOX STANCE

If you study the positions of batsmen who play what may be termed "old-fashioned" cricket, *i.e.* those who still use the off drive, you will see that nearly all of them adopt a stance somewhat similar to that shown in Plate I (A).

Notice particularly the positions of the *left shoulder and the left leg*. Both are instantly ready to move into the correct place in order to make an off drive. *Both* eyes, too, are watching the bowler, so that the expression "the two-eyed" stance is incorrect, since everyone who is blest with the sight of two eyes invariably makes use of *both* of them.

B. THE TWO-SHOULDERED STANCE

The difference between the positions of the left shoulder and left leg in this picture and those in Plate I (A) is at once apparent. Here the bowler has a good view of *both shoulders* of the player as well as of both his eyes. Also the position in which the *feet—and more particularly the right one*—have been placed makes it *impossible to plant the left leg quickly across, get the left shoulder well over the ball, keep the bat straight, and yet maintain perfect balance*. Since many more balls are bowled on the *off* stump than on the *leg*, it follows that scoring must necessarily be slow and cricket unattractive to watch if this two-shouldered stance is adopted.



left leg and left shoulder could be brought right across and so enable the left foot to get within a few inches of where the ball pitched, the off drive—surely the most delightful stroke in all cricket—would soon disappear, and we should be at the mercy of such bowlers as Gregory and MacDonald.

It is always far easier to take the left foot away to leg than it is to put it across on the off side, and therefore it must be simpler to hit balls on and outside the off stump if you are standing in a good position from the start. Try then to keep the **left shoulder well in front**—not screwed round, so that you feel tucked up and uncomfortable—but just by standing in a natural way and as if you were saying to yourself: “He can see my left shoulder all right, but he shan’t see the other if *I* can help it.”

One further word about Stance.

The Danger of Starting with a Bad Stance.

I said just now that you should stand in the manner which feels most comfortable to you; but I also said that you must be well enough balanced to be able to make all the strokes which you require.

If, then, you try to adopt a stance which, though it feels comfortable, prevents you from making the correct shots, **give it up at once** and stand in another way. There is nothing like getting out of

bad habits as quickly as you can, and the younger you are the easier it is to do so.

Suppose, for instance, you tried to stand in a **crouching** position, you couldn't raise yourself quickly enough to come forward or to go back. You would be tied in a knot, so to speak. Remember there has only been one G. L. Jessop !

Again, if you stand with both feet **close together** and with the bat handle **tucked well in between your legs**, you would have great difficulty in getting it out in time to present a square blade to the ball.

Both these stances are bad and look hideous. If you feel you *must* stand in either the crouching position or else in the tucked-up attitude in order to be comfortable, it is probable that your bat is too short in the first instance or too long in the second case. That is one reason why I suggested that you should be careful if you choose a bat yourself. Someone with experience would tell you at once what was wrong.

Therefore try to get into the way of **standing well up** when you take up your stance, and in such a position that you will be able to bring your bat through with its face foremost and quite square. As I have said later on, in the chapter entitled "How to Hold a Bat," there is no necessity to hold

the blade out square to begin with, so long as you can bring it through as you wish.

Now with regard to the placing of your feet. Remember that you cannot make a stroke in any game unless you are **properly balanced on your feet**. And, since your feet regulate the beginning of every cricket stroke, you must pay the greatest attention to the correct placing of them.¹ The **weight** of your body should be on the **toes** and **not** back on the heels, or you will never be able to move forward or go back quickly enough to play the ball.

When you take guard I should advise you, by way of a start, to take middle stump. You know then that your bat is plumb in the middle of the three wickets. Also, if you are inclined, as most beginners are, not to get far enough across with your left leg to play the balls on or outside the off stump, you will not have so far to stretch. Later on, when you have learned the necessity of putting it right over and have become sounder generally, you can ask for middle and leg, which is the guard that the majority of players take, because they stand with

¹ Some batsmen stand with their feet close together, others keep them separated. But whichever way you may choose, the *right foot should be just inside the crease*—not on the chalk line, because this counts the same as if you were out of your ground.

their legs clear of the wickets and are thus less likely to be given out "leg before." Your **block hole** will for the most part be made on the crease line or a little behind it.

When you have got your feet in position—and remember this is very important, because they have to be ready to move at a second's notice—**don't shuffle about**. Keep them perfectly still, and wait till their turn comes to shift. Any unnecessary movement increases the difficulty of sighting the ball properly; and, besides this, your balance will probably be upset when you ought, particularly, to be maintaining it. You may, by all means, keep lifting and returning your bat a little, as you will be all the more ready to make your stroke, but this only amounts to a little tap, tap, in the block hole as a rule.

CHAPTER III

BATTING

General Advice

I HAVE started with Batting because I think you will find more difficulties in this part of the game than you will in Bowling or Fielding. We all have the instinct of hitting born in us, but, unfortunately, we generally are either right-handed or else left-handed, and by constantly using that hand which Nature has decided for us is the stronger, we neglect the other. But if you are to become a successful batsman, you must use **both** hands to make your strokes properly: your stronger one—be it right or left—to do the actual **hitting**, and the weaker one to act as a **guide** and check upon its stronger brother. Since it is rather the exception to play left-handed, I shall write as if I were dealing with a **right-handed** player, but if any of you who read these pages are left-handed, I hope you will be able to gather what is meant, by altering the wording so that you can apply it to your own case without much difficulty.

First of all, then, let us try to see what the **duty of a batsman** is when he goes out to the wicket.

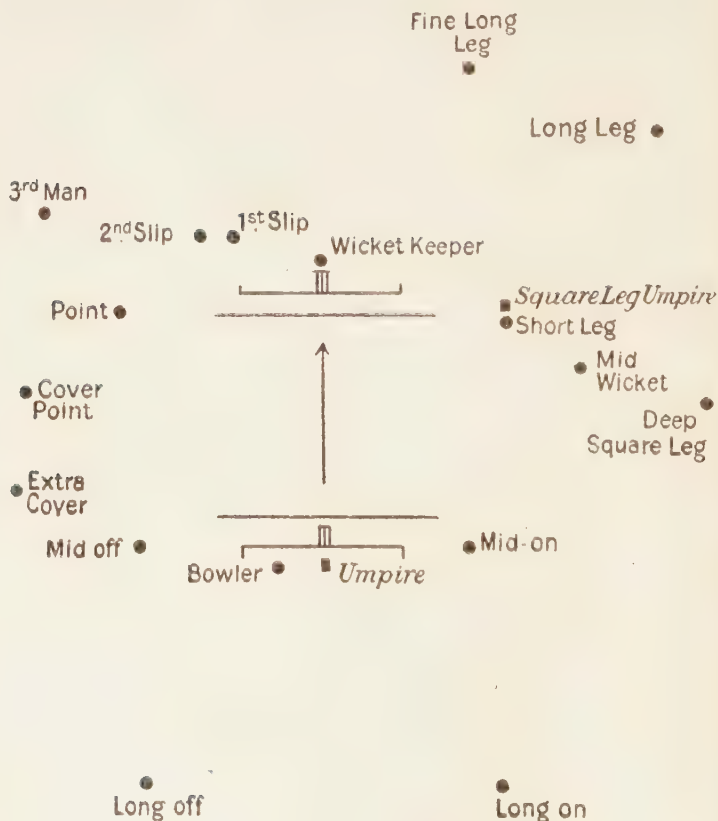
Above everything else he must try to put **self** in the background. For cricket is essentially a "team" game. By that I mean that a player must remember that it is his **side** that matters—not himself, and though it is always a pleasure to feel you have made runs, should you chance to fail, never show your disappointment if you can help it—it is often very difficult, I know—but try to accept your misfortune with a good grace and a word of apology to your Captain for having failed him.

As a No. 1 Batsman. If you are one of the first pair of batsmen you perhaps start with a slight advantage over the others, because you have not had to hang about and wait in the Pavilion with your pads on. In other words, although you probably feel a little nervous—(nearly every one does)—you have not had time to get "jumpy," because you and your partner follow the fielding side to the wicket very soon after they have gone out. They will be busy getting into their places and will not turn round and look at you as they probably will when a wicket has fallen and another of your side comes out by himself. You are going to take the first ball, perhaps, so you walk to the end where the Wicket-keeper is standing—exchange

a word or two with him—anything to keep off that nervousness—and try to convey the impression to him and to yourself that you don't care a hang! Now to the real business. All the fielders are in their places, so you take a look round at them.

Before we go further we will spend one minute having a **good look round the field**. To begin with, *why* do you look round the field at all? Is it merely because you have seen others do it, and therefore you think it is the thing to do? Of course not. You may know how your own bowlers place their field, but it doesn't follow that the bowler you are now going to face has put all his men in the same positions in which *they* usually place theirs. Perhaps you have not been used to a Short leg fielding close in. Unless you had looked round carefully and seen him standing there, you might easily have put a catch straight into his hands. The *ordinary* places (see p. 18) will be the same in all probability, viz. Point, Cover, Mid-off, Mid-on. But supposing you saw Slip and the Wicket-keeper standing well back and Third man on the boundary, what would you say was the reason? A fast bowler, evidently, so you must be ready for his extra pace. Take another instance. What is that man doing out "in the country" rather wide of Mid-on? Probably the bowler is going to bowl off breaks and hopes

THE NAMES OF THE VARIOUS PLACES IN THE FIELD.



that you will try to drive him without getting right out to the ball. In that case, sooner or later you will hit one straight into the hands of this fielder, for the off break will cause you to hit the ball on the leg side if you don't get to the pitch of it. Another important fielder to beware of is Mid-wicket, or one standing on the square leg boundary deeper than Mid-wicket. It is most annoying to hit a catch off a rotten long hop or a full pitch straight to Mid-wicket, because you could so easily have steered the ball out of his reach or hit it along the ground, **if only you had known that he was there.** Therefore let your "look round" be done with an **object—not just a casual glance** as if you were looking to see how many spectators were watching—and try to carry in your mind's eye anyone who is standing in an unusual position. If you do find one who is, to your annoyance, going to block your favourite scoring stroke, don't let it worry you, or you will think about it all the time and get yourself out. Remember the maxim: "**Try to put self in the background,**" and endeavour to realise for what reason you are there.

Now you can take up your stance. By this time some of your nervousness will perhaps have gone, and your one idea is to score as many runs as you can for your side, and to play quietly and deliberately

those balls off which you cannot score, so that you may wear down the fast bowler your opponents have put on at the beginning, in the hope of obtaining your wicket before you get your "eye" in.

We will suppose that you succeed in doing this; and that the fast bowler, having bowled five or six overs to you, off which you have scored three or four boundaries and some useful two's and singles, while your partner at the other end has not found much difficulty with the bowling either—is taken off, to make way for a medium-pace bowler, who at once gets you out. The score-board reads 43. 1. 26.

Have you Achieved your Object? It largely depends on the state of the wicket, doesn't it? If it is a tricky one and likely to get even more difficult by the time your opponents go in, you certainly have. Even if it is a true fast wicket, you have done good work and given your side a good start, which means a great deal—also you have knocked off that fast bowler, who was so liable to get a wicket or two in the first few overs. When you come back to the Pavilion, the rest of your side will probably ask you about the state of the wicket—what the bowling is like, etc. Be as cheery as you can—say there is nothing in the bowling if you like—it may help some nervous friend of yours who is playing in a school match for the first time.

As No. 6. Let us take another case. You are No. 6 this time and your side has scored a good many runs, but not quite enough for your Captain to be able to declare the innings “closed,” so as to put the other side in to bat. A wicket has just fallen, and, as you go out, he tells you to hit out for all you are worth at anything which is reasonable. This, from a selfish point of view, would entail a big sacrifice, for you will have to take risks and run a danger of losing your wicket. But you are trying to put self behind remember—you are going to do it **for your side**, and your school. And you bring it off! You are missed before you have scored, because you made a half-hearted stroke; but after that you hit as if you meant it, and at the end of half an hour your Captain is able to declare his innings closed. This is another example of your object achieved.

Two True Incidents of Objects Achieved. Now let us take two instances of how batsmen accomplished what they set out to do—both of which actually happened in first-class matches. In 1902 the Australians were over here, and although they had won two Test Matches and drawn two others, and so had won the “rubber,”—viz. the best out of five,—great interest was shown over the last, which was played at The Oval. England had to play the

fourth innings and required 263 to win. They lost five wickets for 48 ! But still people hoped against hope, for was not G. L. Jessop yet to come—the man who could alter the appearance of a match in half an hour by his marvellous eye, the dazzling quickness of his footwork, and his terrific and beautifully timed hitting ? The crowd held their breath as he walked quickly to take his place at the wicket. Crash went the ball against the railings again and again. The spectators were wild with joy. This was the cricket they loved ! England would win yet ! In sixty-five minutes he and F. S. Jackson had added 109—wonderful scoring under the circumstances—England with her back to the wall. At last he was out, and the people rose as one man to cheer him as he ran up the Pavilion steps. He had scored 104 runs, which will always live in the minds of those who saw them made and of those who read about them afterwards. Fifteen runs were still wanted when Rhodes—he used to go in last in those days—joined Hirst. Together this pair of Yorkshiremen calmly hit off those runs, and England had won by one wicket !

One more Story. In 1907 Yorkshire had but to draw their second match with Essex to win the Championship. They started easy favourites, but Essex piled up an enormous score—over 500—and to

this Yorkshire replied with 98. A full day's play remained and defeat seemed to be staring them in the face. Their early batsmen set themselves the task of wearing down the bowling, and their efforts were rewarded. Over an hour, however, was still to go, when Ernest Smith, a mighty hitter by nature and a splendid all-round cricketer, came in. He was "**not out, O,**" at the close of play! and Yorkshire had saved the match and won the Championship.

CHAPTER IV

BATTING (*continued*)

How to Hold a Bat. If you hold your bat in a perfectly natural way, *i.e.* with the left hand above the right and with the hands quite close together, generally about an inch from the top of the handle, there is not much danger of anything being wrong; but I have sometimes noticed **two very bad faults** against which you should be on your guard. The first of these is a tendency **to slip the left hand round the handle** so that the knuckles and inside of the wrist are facing the batsman. This is not only wrong, but also dangerous. In the first place, you cannot swing through freely, because your elbow and wrist joints are straight and locked; secondly, you run a risk of straining your wrist. The other bad fault is that of **letting the right hand slide down the handle** when a forward stroke, with which I shall deal presently, is being made. Both hands should work together, the left arm chiefly doing the guiding, while the right does the greater part

of the hitting. How, then, are you to hold the bat in your **left** hand ? Well, the back of your hand and wrist should be facing the bowler ; and, if you use your left wrist properly, you will see that it bends outwards towards the bowler when the stroke is made, and you will not feel that the handle is “ in its way.” Now for the **right** hand. To begin with, of course, the knuckles and back of the wrist are in the opposite direction to that of the left hand, *i.e.* they are turned away from the bowler.

Remember your right arm is strong and your natural one to use, and you can almost let it look after itself, provided that you allow your left shoulder, elbow, and wrist to do their job, viz. to guide and keep their partner in check.

Position of the Blade. As regards the blade of the bat itself, you will notice that nearly every cricketer turns it **slightly inwards**, towards his legs, when he is standing to receive the ball. This seems to be the best position, because it does away with any feeling of awkwardness which you might experience if you held it out square to the bowler. W. G. Grace, of course, used to hold his in this latter way, but he was a great exception, and could play in a way which few—if any—could ever hope to imitate.

PLATE II

How TO HOLD THE BAT

A. *Right*

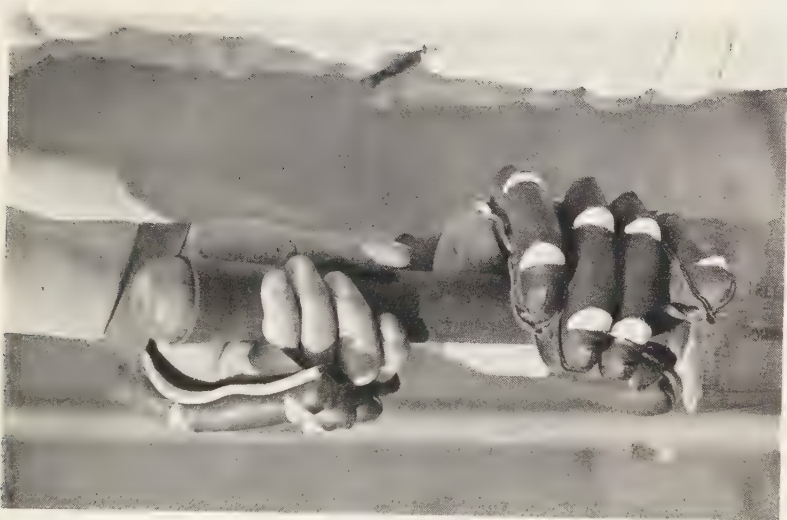
You will notice that :—

1. The hands are close together. This will enable them to work as one, and the *left* hand will be able to act as a steadying influence upon its stronger brother.
2. The *knuckles* of the *left* hand and also the *outside* of the *left wrist* are *facing the bowler*. This will allow the blade of the bat to slant downwards rather than upwards when a forward stroke for defence is made. In addition, the left hand will be free to function properly, since the *left elbow* can and *must be bent outwards* towards the ball.
3. It is important to remember to remove your wristlet watch before going in to bat !

B. *Wrong*.

As opposed to the right method you will see that :—

1. There is a distinct *space* between the left hand and the right. This means that they will be *unable to work in harmony*.
2. The *left* hand has been *turned round*. This is against the laws of Nature, because no one can bend the elbows inwards. Remember again that the left elbow must be bent towards the ball when playing forward.
3. The right hand would be allowed to do much as it pleased. Consequently, it would try to bring the bat to the ball with the blade *slanting upwards*, since the left arm and shoulder would be unable to exert any restraining weight and check upon it. The result of this might be a catch in the case of an ordinary forward stroke or a strained left wrist in the case of a drive, since it is most necessary and also natural to “follow through.”
4. The bat is held uncomfortably in the right hand.



CHAPTER V

THE MEANING OF THE "STRAIGHT" BAT AND THE "CROSS" BAT

I AM perfectly certain that if any cricketer were asked what were his earliest recollections of being taught to play, he would say: "I was told to play **with a straight bat**, and when I felt very pleased with myself at having hit the ball in the way that seemed natural to me, I was continually being reminded that my bat was crooked, and that I should never play cricket until I kept it **straight**."

Now there are, I feel sure, many of you who are beginning cricket, who do not understand what is meant by this straight bat business, why you should be pestered with it, and what advantages you will gain by learning to play with one.

The Straight Bat. Here, then, is the definition of it in a few words. The bat is called "straight" when you hold it in such a way that the bottom of it faces the ground and the whole of its **length** faces the ball. In other words, when it is upright. The

direct opposite of this is termed a "cross" bat. This is when you hit with it crooked, instead of holding it perfectly straight. There are some occasions, to which I shall refer later on, when you will receive a type of ball that *must* be hit with a cross bat, but when you hear someone say that So-and-So "plays with a crooked bat," it means that he is a slogger, and has not the patience to learn to play with a straight one, or perhaps the sense to understand the advantages to be gained by doing so. Such a player can never be sound in his methods.

Advantages of Using a Straight Bat. What are the advantages of playing with a straight bat as opposed to a crooked bat? In a word, it often makes all the difference between comparative safety and considerable risk; for it stands to reason that if you play with a cross bat, there is far less chance of hitting the ball and guarding your wicket, since you have only the narrow **width** of the blade with which to strike. Also you will find that the strokes which you tried to make on the off side will mostly go to leg, because your right arm has too much power alone and will bring the bat through with the blade facing the leg side. Do not, however, for one moment imagine that in order to play cricket you must **always** keep the bat straight. Far from it. Some balls, such as the "long hop," require

trouncing, *i.e.* smiting hard with a cross bat, and the full pitch, which is bowled rather low and wide, is asking to be hit in this way. Now, if it is being continually drummed into you that you **must** keep a straight bat in order to play certain balls, it must certainly follow that it is **not natural** to play in this way. No, it is not. The natural way to hit at anything is to use your weapon crooked. But in cricket you have to watch the moving ball so closely, in order to defeat the object of the bowler, that unless he bowls you a bad ball, you have to make use of the entire **length** of your bat. For instance, suppose the ball for some reason did not bounce quite as high as you expected, it might easily get **under** your bat if it was held crooked. But apart from this, you will find it much easier to direct a good ball if you are playing what is called “correct” cricket, because you will put the whole face of the bat square to it.

How to Play with a Straight Bat. What, then, is the way to play with a straight bat? There are several things which combine together to help you to master it.

First and foremost your **feet** play a very important part—or rather the left foot does. The **right foot**, when you are meeting a ball which you can reach from where you are standing, remains where it is,

except that you must allow the right heel to leave the ground. You must remember this, for you cannot make the stroke successfully if you keep it down. But it is the **left foot** which, in a sense, is the more important one. If you are going to hit a ball really hard, it is obvious that you cannot do so when your feet are close together. The reason of this is that you cannot bring the **weight** of your body into the stroke if you are standing perfectly still, and therefore you have to move your left foot forward and raise the right heel so as to be able to add your weight to the shot. Whether you move the left foot forward in a straight line or across to the off side, or away to the leg side, depends upon the direction of the ball in the air. But one thing is very certain, and that is—unless you **do move it in a direction with the flight of the ball and keep it quite close to the bat** you will never be able to hold your bat straight; and not only will your bat be crooked—your **balance** will be lost, *i.e.* you will find yourself falling away from the direction in which you intended to hit the ball, and you will either spoil your bat by hitting it on the edge or else you will be caught—perhaps both!

So you see that the position of your **feet** makes all the difference to your cricket strokes—as, indeed, it does in every game that was ever invented. But,

unfortunately, there are some other very vital things to learn to ensure your bat being straight. I have said before that your left arm is the one which does the guiding and your right arm the hitting. If you allowed your right arm to work alone, it would always hit “crooked.” Therefore it follows that the remainder of this straight-bat lesson must deal with the **left arm**. When you come forward with your left foot advanced to meet the ball, you must let your left shoulder follow in the same direction, and be sure that you get it well over the ball. Next must come the **left elbow**—well away from the body remember—never tucked in; and lastly, follows the left wrist with its back facing the bowler. You may say, as many others have before you: “But if I keep my left wrist in this position, the end of the bat sticks into it.” It certainly will if you keep your wrist **rigid**, but not if you bend it forward so that the knuckle-joints are more or less facing the ground.

Should you find yourself continually pulled up for not putting your left foot far enough across, try pointing your **right toe towards Third man**. You will find it much easier then to plant the left foot well over.

When to Use the “Cross” Bat. You have perhaps gathered from what has been said that the

straight bat is to be employed when you are playing a good ball, or one that you are, at any rate, going to meet and hit very soon after it has pitched. But if you were to hold your bat in this very correct way in order to punish a shorter ball, commonly called a "long hop," you would not be able to smite it as it deserved.

It is for these short balls then that you use the cross bat. Here you ought not to find so much difficulty, for, as I have said, it is the more natural method of hitting. The chief thing you must not do is to "get yourself out," as the saying is. In other words, you have got to be very careful not to hit a catch straight to a fielder. You ought, you see, to be able to steer it clear, for, as the ball is short, you have more time to make up your mind where you are going to hit it.

If you get a *straight* "long hop," you cannot easily hit it back past the bowler with a cross bat. For this particular ball you must take a good **step back** with your **right** leg, being careful to see that it is straight behind the flight of the ball, and hit towards Mid-on, or rather wider, using your right forearm chiefly. To make this stroke it is often a help to slip the right hand a little down the handle so as to give it greater control and additional leverage.

CHAPTER VI

BATTING (*continued*)

How to Lift up your Bat and Take it Back.
Before we begin to talk about making different kinds of strokes, there is one thing which you must learn, and that is the correct way to lift your bat back. So many strokes are spoilt by taking it back wrongly, that it is essential to make a good start. Shall we first see how it can be taken back wrongly, and then try to explain the reason for this, and afterwards try and correct the mistake ?

I have seen some boys lift their bats back with the end of it pointing towards Third man. Now, the whole aim and object of taking the bat back is to enable you to **swing through in the same straight line** as would happen if you attached a stone to a piece of string and started it swinging. If, then, you have lifted your bat towards Third man, where ought it naturally to finish when you swing it through ? “Wide of Mid-on,” you will answer. So you see this must be wrong. Someone might say: “Yes, that would be the line which the stone and string would take, but I should straighten the

PLATE III

HOW TO LIFT YOUR BAT AND TAKE IT BACK

A. *Right*

Though taken from a slightly different angle to that of the accompanying photograph, you will, I think, see what is meant by what is called the "open" face of the bat.

In this picture the *elbows* have been allowed to *go away from the sides* and the bat is being taken *straight back in a line over the middle stump*, with the blade turned "open" towards Point. If you do this, you will have no difficulty in bringing the bat *straight through* towards the ball, and, moreover, the blade will meet it perfectly *square*.

B. *Wrong*

This picture shows a common fault which ruins nearly all cricket strokes. The bat has been lifted back with its end pointing towards Third man. Also the elbows, *being tight in to the side of the body*, have not allowed the face of the bat to open outwards. You can see that it is almost facing the ground. The return journey will be disastrous, because, for one thing, the *blade will not come through square* to the ball, and also the batsman, in his endeavour to play with a straight bat, will have to describe a semi-circular flourish in order to make what can only be a poor substitute for the stroke he intended.

path of my bat as I came through." I am afraid you could not do that. To begin with, you would have to make your bat describe a sort of circular movement or "**flourish**," as it is called ; and in nearly every case you would play "outside the ball," that is to say, you would hit the ball with the edge nearest to you, and if you did hit it near the middle, the right hand would compel the ball to go to the leg side. Also, it would require an extra effort on your part to try to bring it through in the position you wanted.

So be on your guard against this, and remember that **a faulty back lift puts every cricket stroke out of gear.**

How, then, are you to lift it ? You must take it back in as straight a line as you possibly can, *i.e.* towards the middle stump—think of the stone and the string. So much for the actual *line* of the back lift, but that is not quite all. When you lift your bat back, it is essential that you should allow **both your elbows to go free, away from your body.** This will allow the blade to turn outwards, or what is called "open" in your hands, so that at the top of the back swing it is facing Point. When it swings back again, it will turn in quite naturally and present its full face to the ball. This is nearly always the natural way which everyone has of lifting a bat. Remember that tip about the **elbows** though.

CHAPTER VII

BATTING (*continued*)

The Various Types of Balls you will Receive when Batting, and How to Deal with Them. It would be interesting to know what is in a batsman's mind as we see him walking out from the Pavilion, thoughtfully putting on his gloves. Perhaps he is saying to himself: "I wonder how many I am going to make to-day," and perhaps he hopes, with all his heart, that he may not get a perfect "snorter" first ball, and so probably have to retire for a "duck," and be no help or credit to his side.

What sort of ball then does he hope he will receive? There are a variety which he may get; but, unfortunately for him, he knows he cannot choose the one he wants, and, moreover, he feels that the bowler is going to try to bowl him an awkward one, so as to do his best to get him out before he gets his eye in. If he had his choice he would probably say: "I will have a nice, fat, full pitch, please, just wide of my legs, so that I can safely hit it to the boundary

without having any need to run at all.” But, as I said just now, he has to play the ball which is bowled to him, and I will now try to explain the different kinds he may receive and the way to deal with each.

We will begin by supposing that the bowler is kind without meaning to be so, and that instead of bowling the “awkward” one he intended, he serves you up a full pitch.

The Full Pitch. Now a full pitch is generally an easy ball to play, because it does not touch the ground before it reaches you ; therefore you do not have to use your brains as to where it will go after it pitches, as you must certainly do in the case of a great many balls. But, easy as many full pitches are to play, there are some that can be “pigs” to manage, and you are quite likely, until you have played cricket for some little time, to find yourself getting out to them. For instance, if you are small and you see a full pitch hurtling at your chest or your head, it is certainly rather alarming to say the least of it ! Your one idea—and a natural one too—is to defend yourself ! So you either step back rather hurriedly and possibly overbalance and fall on your wicket, or else you hit it half-heartedly on the splice of your bat and get caught. Lots of boys get out from this particular ball, so don't be too disheartened and think you will never be able to

PLATE IV

HITTING A FULL PITCH TO LEG

The distinction between the finish of this stroke and that of the next photograph is intended to show the difference between hitting a full pitch which is bowled fairly high and rather wide and that of heaving at one which is bowled lower and also straighter. Here you will see that the *power* has come chiefly from the *right forearm and wrist*—there is more suggestion of a “punch” than of a full-shouldered swing. This will be quite sufficient to send the ball to the boundary, and there will be far less chance of mistiming the stroke.



PLATE V



PLATE V

HITTING A LOW FULL PITCH ON THE LEG STUMP

As a contrast to the forearm punch, which you saw in Plate IV, this is essentially a *full-shouldered swing*. The full pitch was bowled rather lower and slightly straighter this time and, as you can see from the feet, the batsman has come out to *meet* the ball and has despatched it over the head of Mid-on.

Were it not for the leafless tree in the background, we might well think he was overcome with thirst !

play it. When you have lost your wicket in this way once or twice you will realise you must not get flurried, but just hit it quite quietly, and when you are older still you will clump it for four. But, luckily, there are other kinds of full pitches besides this one. There is that one I mentioned before—the one which our batsman hoped that he might get, as he walked to the wicket. But do not imagine that every time you get this one you are going to score four. Probably if you hit it properly you will, and I would almost go so far as to say that if a Preparatory School possessed an XI. who could score four off every full pitch that was bowled in a match, it would scarcely ever be beaten. But a very great number of them, and especially those which are bowled to leg, go unpunished. Why? I believe the reason is this. From our earliest cricketing days we are told that we ought to score four off a full pitch to leg. Therefore, when we see one coming along we get so excited at the prospect of “another four” to us, that we hit with a **full swing** at the ball and are either much too early or, more often, far too late for it; and remember, if **once the ball gets past the bat on the leg side it cannot be overtaken.**

How, then, are you to give yourselves a better chance, at any rate, of making certain of treating it as it deserves?

First of all, keep as calm as you can ; secondly, *wait* for the ball, so that you “**time**” your stroke correctly, *i.e.* hit it at exactly the right moment ; and thirdly, instead of taking a full-shouldered swing at it, hit in the direction just in front of the square-leg umpire, using your forearm and wrist **only**. This will be quite enough to send it to the boundary, and I think you will find that you will hit twice as many there as you did before when you “swung” at it.

Then there is the **full pitch on the off side**. If this is bowled at a nice height, *i.e.* so that you can hit it comfortably, you ought not to find much difficulty in connecting with it at any rate. I do not say that you can always score off it, as you can when it is bowled to leg, because you may find it hard to steer between the many fielders there are on this side. If you can steer it successfully between them, or perhaps hit it over their heads, you are generally rewarded with four runs. But take care that you are not caught by Mid-off, or that you do not return a catch to the bowler. There is sometimes the danger of this happening even from a full-pitch hit off the middle of the bat, and it is perfectly sickening to get out in this way.

The Yorker. If our batsman who is on his way to the wicket wishes that he may have a full pitch to

leg, and so "break his duck," he also probably hopes, with all his heart, that he may not receive a fast "yorker" on his leg stump.

What is a "yorker"? It is rather a beast, because you hardly know what it is until you have actually played it—or been bowled by it!

What happens is this. You see the ball coming towards you and think at first sight that it is a full pitch or a half-volley. Therefore you go *forward* to meet it. Suddenly you don't feel quite sure about it, and all at once it seems to duck very quickly, and you have only just time to drop your bat on it and so stop it. When you have recovered from this shock, if you look at the ground where your bat and the ball met, you will see you have made a little dent in the turf with the bottom of your bat. This dent will be very near your block hole, either just in front of it, or almost in it—or, if it has been an especially good yorker—just *inside* the crease. Perhaps you will say after reading this, that "If it came up as far as this, I could have played it like a full pitch!" Certainly you could have made it into a full pitch if you had been a little quicker in getting to it; but that awkward little "duck" or drop which a yorker gives at the finish, makes it impossible for you to play it otherwise, if you have once let it get too far. After you have played

cricket for some time, you will find you have a kind of instinct for playing yorkers and they will no longer present the terrors that they once did ; but if you are off your guard, or if you do not play forward hard—beware ! You will not see many yorkers bowled in first-class matches : firstly, because good batsmen do not often *allow* them to be bowled, *i.e.* they hit them on the full pitch ; and secondly, if they do allow them to be bowled, they find little difficulty in playing them ; and thirdly, because it requires a good deal of effort to bowl them.

The great Surrey bowler, Tom Richardson, was once asked why he did not bowl his yorker more frequently, and he replied : “ It takes too much out of me, sir, and it isn’t worth it.” You sometimes see a yorker bowled to batsmen when they first come in, because their eye is not yet in and they are taken by surprise, and some bowlers try to deal it up to the “ rabbits ” at the end of an innings ; but, as a rule, a bowler depends upon length, spin—and good fortune—to dismiss the batsmen.

The Half-Volley. This is a ball which wants hitting hard, and should never be let off ; but it sometimes gets a wicket because the batsman has failed to take advantage of it. If you were told beforehand : “ The next ball you receive will be a half-volley,” you would most certainly have a “ go ”

at it, and probably hit it to the boundary. How, then, shall we explain this particular kind of ball? It is one which is bowled **right up** to you, so that when you advance to meet it, you find you can hit it the merest fraction of a second after it has touched the ground. This means that the ball has no chance of altering its direction after it pitches, as one will which is not bowled so far up, because you have anticipated any risk of that kind. It seems almost impossible, then, if you have understood what is meant by a half-volley, that you should ever get bowled by it. And yet people do! This is because they do not advance the left foot far enough to hit it on the first rise, and so they have to try to stretch out further than they need and probably play rather half-heartedly at it.

If, then, you know you have got a half-volley, remember these two things : (1) shut your teeth, and (2) crash into it !

The Long Hop. This is a ball which should not get a batsman out, but which, nevertheless, sometimes gets wickets. By that I mean that if you lose your wicket to a long hop, you get yourself out and cannot blame the bowler. If, then, you ought not to be bowled by it, surely it must mean that you will have plenty of time to play it and have not to use your brain to think how to keep it from hitting

your wicket. This is absolutely true. A long hop—as its name suggests—is pitched so **short** that you cannot reach it on the half-volley—even if you jump a step or two to get to it.

How is it to be treated then ?

If it is outside your off stump, you put your left foot across in its direction and hit it hard with a cross bat. If it is straight, or on your legs, or outside your legs, you aim at hitting it wide of Mid-on, using your strong right forearm. You ought never to miss such a rotten ball. The way in which people get themselves out to long hops is by “**flicking**” at them and getting caught in the Slips, or else being careless and hitting a catch straight into the hands of a fielder.

The Good-length Ball. As opposed to the long hop and half-volley this is essentially the type of ball which *does* get batsmen out ; though, naturally, there are times when the batsman presents his wicket to the bowler, even off this particular ball. Now it is rather difficult to lay down any definite ruling as to what actual distance from the batsman the good-length ball pitches ; because, first of all, it depends upon whether the wicket is hard, which makes the ball come more quickly to the bat after it hits the ground, or whether it is slow ; and secondly, we have not all got the same reach and quickness on our feet.

First of all, then, let us say that the good-length ball pitches between the places where the long hop and the half-volley touch the ground. In other words, when it is bowled to you, you feel "I can't hit this ball on the half-volley and I certainly cannot take liberties with it as I should if it were a long hop." Quite right. In fact you can't, as a general rule, take liberties with it at all. The bowler has bowled you a ball over which he is the master and you have to follow. What is he compelling you to do? He is what is called making you "**play**" him. It is not necessarily difficult, but if you do not go and meet the ball and play **right out at it**—once again **by moving the left foot well to it**—you run a grave danger of losing your wicket. You must play a very correct stroke—your bat nice and straight—nose down, head, elbow, and left shoulder well forward, and your wrist bent to the bowler. Another advantage of keeping the left wrist bent is that you slant the blade of your bat **downwards** rather than upwards, and so you are less liable to return a catch to the bowler.

When the wicket is slow and the ball takes a fraction of a second longer to come to your bat, be very careful not to play just too soon, or you will hit the ball on the **upward rise** of your bat and so get "caught and bowled."

Or again, when the wicket is slow the ball "bites" the ground, and more readily takes the break which the bowler has put on. If, then, you do not keep that left leg of yours close up to the bat and do your best to **smother** the ball after it pitches, by getting right out to it, the break will beat your bat, and the ball will get round it and bowl you.

Now this good-length ball which necessitates your playing what is called a forward defensive stroke may, of course, be bowled in three directions: (1) on the off side; (2) straight; (3) on the leg side.

The same golden rules apply whichever way the ball is coming. You know already that you must put your **left leg well across to the off-side ball**, because, as has been said again and again, your bat won't be straight if you don't. In just the same way you must bring it forward to meet the ball which is straight, and also the one which is on the leg side. Perhaps you will not experience so much trouble in doing this to the straight ball, but look out for that one on your legs. The temptation is to neglect to take the left foot far enough away in a line with Mid-on, *i.e.* you can so easily keep it in too straight a line, and then the stroke is ruined; because, feeling that you cannot swing through in the direction you want, owing to your left leg obstructing the way, you swing crooked, and find yourself trying to hit

PLATE VI

PLAYING FORWARD TO A STRAIGHT GOOD-LENGTH BALL

A. *Right*

Here you can see the necessity of *advancing the left leg sufficiently straight* down the wicket to enable the *left shoulder* and the bat to be brought in one dead line with the ball.

The photograph also brings out very clearly the *outward bend of the left elbow and left wrist*. There is also a distinct relaxing of the grip of the right hand, as if it had allowed the left to do the major share. Notice, too, that the *right heel* has been *slightly raised from the ground*, thus enabling the *weight* of the body to come *forward*.

B. *Wrong*

This picture shows a thoroughly bad and half-hearted stroke. To begin with, there is an entire lack of "finish" to the shot and the beginning has been equally poor. The *left foot has gone away to the on side* instead of coming straight forward, and this has been followed by a *backward tilt* of the head, a *retiring left shoulder*, and a wretchedly crooked bat.

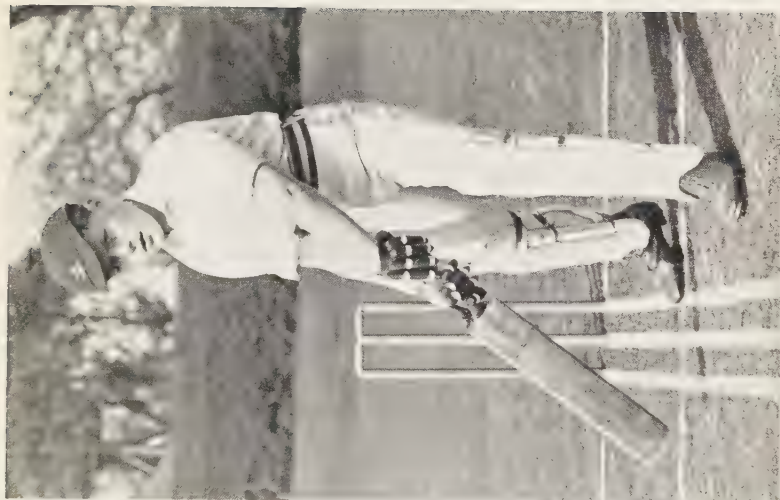


PLATE VI

B

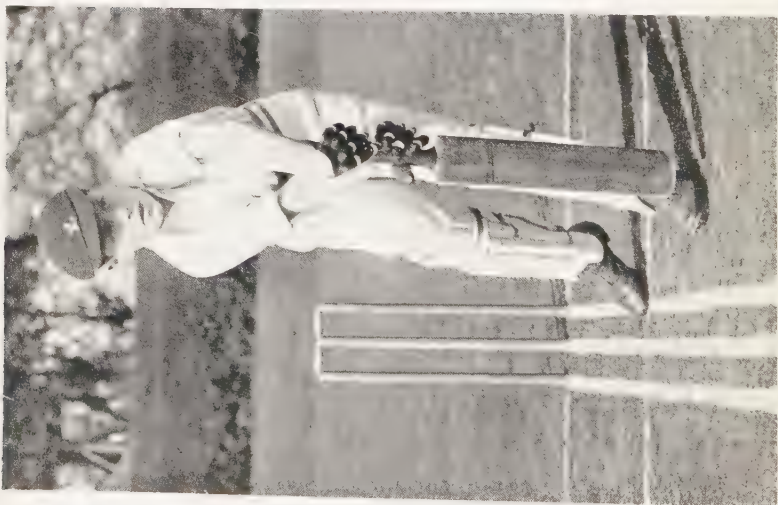
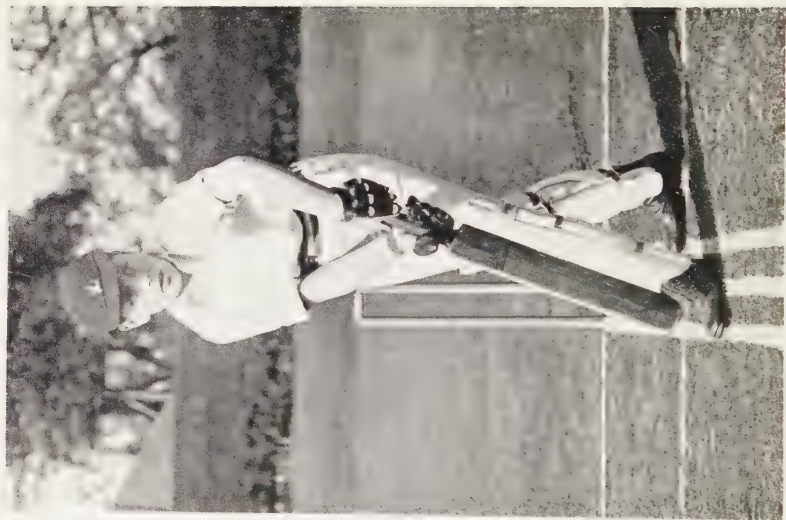


PLATE VII

PLAYING FORWARD TO A GOOD-LENGTH BALL JUST OUTSIDE THE LEG STUMP

A. *Right*

It looks in the photograph as if the ball might have been made into a half-volley by jumping out to it and hitting with a full swing. Very possibly it might, but at the same time the shot shown here is a perfectly safe one, and it is far better to take the *left leg away in a line with Mid-on* than to put it in front and run the risk of being leg before.

B. *Wrong*

This is a cowardly shot, and looks like it ! There is a distinct suggestion of "*flinch*" about the left shoulder and expression on the face. Also the *very worst thing possible has been done with the left leg*. Should the bat miss the ball—and there is every likelihood that it will—the result is obvious. In addition to this exhibition of fear (!), the *right heel* has been *kept down* and the right hand has moved away from its fellow.

the ball somewhere by the umpire instead of fairly straight on the leg side. In many cases you will not only miss the ball altogether, but it will hit your pads and you will find yourself given out l.b.w. or else be bowled off your pads, because your left leg will be in the place where the bat should have been.

The Ordinary Ball on the Leg Side which Pitches just Shorter than the Good Length. I said, a little way back, that I believed that if a Preparatory School possessed an XI. who could hit full pitches with regularity they would scarcely ever be beaten. Now there is another ball on the leg side which, though it is not so easy as the full pitch to hit, will gain you any amount of runs, and this is the one mentioned above. I have no doubt at all that you will often come across it, and so you may as well learn at once the way to play it. I have said that it is just short of the good length. That means that it is a little further up than the rank long hop, and yet not far enough for you to treat it with the respect that you would show to a good-length ball. Therefore **you cannot lean back** and hit it, neither can you reach out with a straight bat and play it. When you first get this ball bowled to you, you will probably do the same as thousands of others and try to hit it too fine, *i.e.* **not nearly soon enough.** The result will be that you will miss it

altogether, and for this simple reason—you cannot hit this ball after it has passed you.

This, then, is the way you must try to play it: Put the left leg towards the ball with the head and body leaning forward. Now hit the ball—using your right arm chiefly—before it reaches the left leg. This should be a good firm blow, but at the same time, don't make the mistake of trying to hit extra hard. Many fours are lost in this way.

The Leg Break. Although this is not really a difficult ball to play, as long as you **keep your head** and **do not attempt anything rash**, you will often see a leg-break bowler, if once he finds his length, get a side out quite cheaply. This is generally because a really good leg-break bowler is seldom met. It is a much harder thing for a right-hander to bowl a leg break than an off break, because it is not his natural way of spinning the ball. When, therefore, we see the bowler's hand turn over in the opposite direction to what we are accustomed, we know that the ball, after it pitches, will **go away** from our leg side towards the off side. Now, as I said, we are not used to this—we have got so accustomed to finding the ball coming *towards* our legs after pitching, that we hardly know what to make of it. We scrape forward in a rather half-hearted fashion, the ball turns sharply, because we have not

gone far enough forward with all confidence to smother the break, it hits the edge of our bat, and Slip brings off an easy catch. Sometimes, too, in scraping forward we lift our back leg—the ball beats the bat and we are stumped.

Or again, we try another method. We think we will try to knock this bowler off by hitting him several times for four. So we dance out and hit rather wildly towards the leg side against the break. Now this hitting against the break is one of the most dangerous things you can attempt, and unless you can be sure of hitting the leg break on the half-volley you ought not to try to do it. If you can get it on the half-volley by all means do so, and hit it in the way that it deserves, viz. with a straight hard crash and a good follow through; but the other method is hopeless. It generally means that you hit with a crooked bat to begin with, and, since the ball is rising all the time, it follows that it will be hit in the air towards the leg side, which for a leg-break bowler is simply plastered with fielders.

The Way to Play a Leg-Break Bowler is as follows :—

1. If you receive a good-length ball, play a forward defensive shot and get well out to the ball. Half methods such as scraping forward are useless.
2. If you see you can run out and hit the ball

PLATE VIII



PLATE VIII

PUSHING THE BALL OFF THE LEGS

Except that the feet are facing a little too square, the position is a good one and the stroke correct and perfectly safe. The ball will go fairly slowly between Mid-on and Mid-wicket and, unless the latter happens to be a left-handed thrower, there will, in all probability, be a run, in spite of the fact that the striker is right back on his wickets.

on the full pitch, by all means do so ; but here again *your footwork must be perfect and you must go the whole way*, but not *too* far or you will hit with the splice and be caught.

3. When there is a chance of the half-volley shot, seize your opportunity and hit hard. If you are going to hit high, aim to avoid the fielders “ in the country.”

4. If you get a short long hop which you know, from watching the bowler's hand, must break from leg to off, step back and try to cut it past Cover or Extra-cover. Remember that a leg-break bowler has most of his fielders placed on the leg side. If you hit to the off side you will also be keeping the rule of **hitting with the break**.

5. If it is impossible to hit the ball by any of these methods, try turning round a little and **push** the ball off the legs with a **straight** bat.

CHAPTER VIII

BATTING (*continued*)

Forward Play and Back Play. If you come to think of it, all cricket strokes are played by either coming forward or going back, and I am therefore going to subdivide this chapter as follows :—

I. **Forward Play** (*a*) for Defence.

(*b*) for Attack.

II. **Back Play.**

I. (1) **Forward Play** (*a*) for Defence. I have already said that the good-length ball, which pitches somewhere between the long hop and the half-volley, gives you the feeling, from where you are standing, that you cannot take liberties with it and drive it as you can a half-volley, nor can you step back and hit it as you would a long hop, because you haven't time to do so unless the wicket is a very slow one. Sometimes, it is true, if you are **very** quick on your feet and **go the whole way**, you can jump out to the good-length ball—especially when the pitch is

PLATE IX

A. NEARING THE FINISH OF A FORWARD STROKE OUTSIDE THE OFF STUMP

The ball has been bowled rather wide of the off stump, as can be seen from the shape of the stroke. Cover-point will no doubt be expecting to dash in and save a run.

Apart from this, however, the photograph brings out a great many points which I have tried to emphasise in connection with this shot.

1. The *left foot* has been brought *right across* and the *left knee* is *straight*.
2. The *right heel* is leaving the ground.
3. The *left shoulder* is well over the ball.
4. The *left elbow* is bending outwards to the ball.
5. The *knuckles* of the *left hand* are nearly facing the ground.
6. The *grip* of the *right hand* is very clearly relaxed.
7. The *blade* of the bat will be *slanting down* as the ball is met.
8. The *weight* of the *body* is well forward and the *chin* down.

B. THE FINISH OF A FORWARD DEFENSIVE STROKE ON THE OFF SIDE

Though the *left foot* has not had to be brought so far across in this picture as in Plate IX (A), owing to the ball being a straighter one, you can, all the same, see the main feature of this particular stroke, which I have repeated so often that I am afraid you must be tired of it! viz. that *first and foremost the left foot must be put across to the ball* or the shot cannot be made safely nor successfully.

In other respects the position resembles that of the preceding photograph except that Extra-cover or Mid-off will field the ball instead of Cover-point.

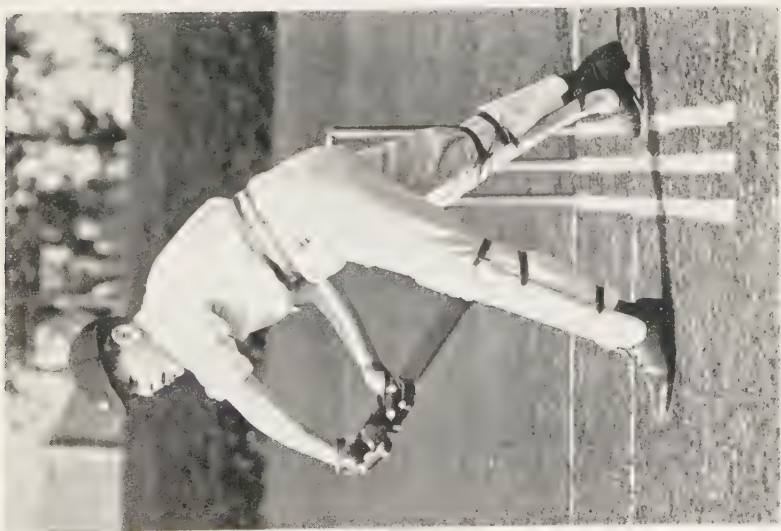
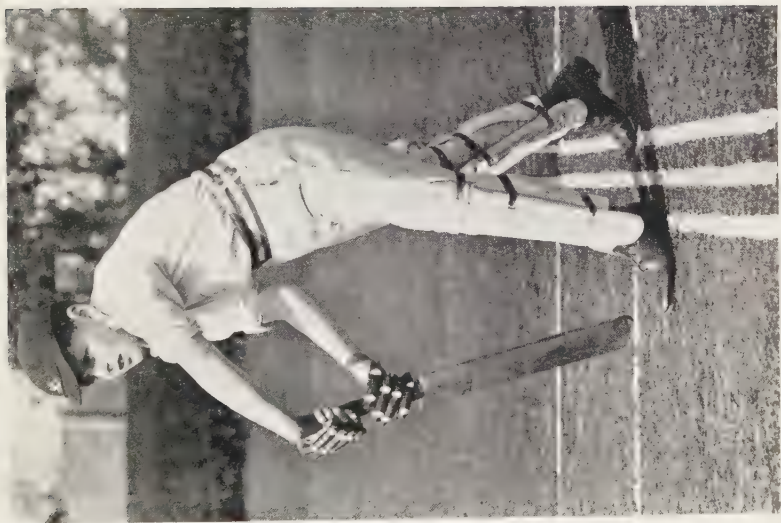


PLATE X



PLATE X

THE WRONG POSITION AND FINISH OF A FORWARD DEFENSIVE STROKE ON THE OFF SIDE

If you have read the descriptions of this stroke as shown in Plate IX (A) and (B), you cannot, I think, help seeing that almost *everything is wrong* in this picture.

To begin with—*look at the position of the left foot.*

The three chalk lines have given the whole show away.

What is the result ? The batsman has tried to reach the ball, but *he cannot do so with a straight bat, because he has not put his left leg far enough across.*

Look next at the difference between the *left shoulder* in this Plate and the other two. If he had tried to get it more over the ball he would have *fallen forward*, simply because he had *nothing to support his weight*. Look at the *right hand, arm, and shoulder* creeping in, delighted, as it were, to have the opportunity of showing the way.

Where will the ball go ? It is more than likely that *Slip* will get a catch and that there will be a dent on the *edge* of the bat as the result. If I may be forgiven for saying so—clearly the batsman this time hasn't a leg to stand upon !

fast—and **make** it into a half-volley. But you cannot do that from a standing position. It is then that you have to play the correct forward defensive stroke which I have described when dealing with the good-length ball. Sometimes you will score one or two—possibly a four now and then, but for the most part you should be content to play quietly and to wait for the loose balls which will come along presently.

Forward Play (b) for Attack. Now we come to the **off drive**—probably the most delightful and satisfactory of all the **safe** strokes in cricket. There is another stroke on the off side which gives as great, if not greater pleasure, and that is the slash at the good-length ball outside the off stump with a cross bat. The ball is hit just after the rise, but later than the half-volley, and the feeling as it goes off the middle of the bat to the boundary is one of sheer joy. But it is **not a safe shot**, and for that reason is often called an “**if**” shot, which means, in plain language, “**if** you hit it plumb and true—four runs. If you don’t—the Pavilion!” Don’t indulge in this, then, unless your side is in such a position that your wicket is of no particular value.

To return to the off drive, however. There are to be no half-measures about this stroke—it is going to be a good, solid, honest crack for four—or, at any rate, it is going to make someone who gets

in the way of it think a bit ! First of all, **the ball is to be hit on the half-volley**. If you don't hit it in this way, it will not be a drive but a forward stroke with rather more "push" in it than "drive." In some other respects it is played like the forward defensive stroke, viz. left foot well out and across to the ball, left shoulder following well over too, head forward, chin down, right heel raised to add the extra weight of the body, etc., but the **finish** is different. You remember that when you make a forward defensive stroke you are content to play or push the ball back to the bowler or to some other fieldsman. As this is going to be a full-blooded drive, with every ounce of shoulder, weight, and smack that you can give it, it stands to reason that if you check your bat after you have hit the ball, much power and balance will be lost. Therefore come right through with your arms at full stretch and let the wrists have full play, and bring the bat round so that it finishes over your left shoulder. Do not **think** about this finish when you are half-way through the stroke or you will hurry it and spoil things. Your wrists will do all that is necessary if you let them.

(2) **The Straight Drive**. You make this drive in the same way that you do the off drive, but as the ball is going to pitch straighter, you have no need, of

PLATE XI

CORRECT FINISH OF AN OFF DRIVE

In a sense this is the *pièce de résistance* of all cricket strokes.

The satisfaction which you feel when you have hit the ball “plumb off the meat” is a thing to dwell upon and wipes out many previous failures.

It is therefore the duty of everyone who has the interests of cricket at heart to prevent this beautiful stroke from dying out. So long as you stand properly, *i.e.* with the *left* foot and *left* shoulder well in front, you will always be ready to make it when the chance occurs, but if you stand “wide open,” you *won't*!

The Saturday afternoon crowd loves the high “ballooner,” but those “in the know” sigh nowadays for the old-fashioned, honest off drive for four, and care but little for the pushes off the legs for ones and twos.

The position in the photograph opposite is good. Notice the *balance* at the finish of the stroke, the full *follow through*, the point of the right toe—and last, but not least, the secret of it all, *viz.* the *straightness and correct placing of the left leg*.



PLATE XII



PLATE XII

THE WRONG FINISH OF AN OFF DRIVE

This picture, compared with the previous one, is horrible to look upon and is best forgotten !

Here again it is the left leg which tells its own tale !

Moreover, there is no determination about the stroke.

The bat is crooked and has been "hung out to dry," nor can the weight of the body possibly be brought forward without knocking over the photographer.

The best thing to do is to turn back again and get the taste out of your mouth—*quam celerrime*.

course, to put your **left leg** so far across as you did just now. All the same you **must get it to the ball**. You know enough by now to realise what will happen if you don't !

(3) **The On Drive.** This really is a paying shot, and it is a pity we don't see more of it than we do. It is a more natural shot than is the off drive, because you can and *must* take your **left leg away to the on side** this time, so as to allow your bat to swing through inside it, *i.e.* in the place where your left leg was originally. If you can get your leg away wide enough and turn the toe towards Mid-on, you have won at least half the battle. But in this lies the difficulty. More than half the people who try to play this stroke **will not get their left leg out of the way**. I suppose they feel they are going to get hit, or that the ball may jump up. Anyhow, instead of giving the bat room to swing through and dealing the ball a good honest clout past Mid-on, they advance with the left leg straight—more in the manner of the position for a straight drive—and then, of course, find they cannot get their bat where they want it. What is the result ?

They play a stroke which was very aptly described some years ago by F. B. Wilson, the old Cambridge Captain, as a “**cow**” shot. You know how a cow kicks—round sideways—well, this is how a

“cow” shot is made. Instead of being able to swing through in a straight line towards Mid-on, or even a little wider, with a **straight** bat, they use a “**crooked**” or sometimes even “flat” or horizontal bat, and try to hit the ball square. Occasionally it comes off, but you will see at once what a risky shot it is, because you have only got the **width** of the bat with which to hit, and if you miss it you are leg before. Is it worth it? A thousand times, NO—and it is not a cricket stroke either.

Another fatal mistake to make when you see a ball coming at your legs is to **run away**. Not only does it *look* bad, but if you come to think of it, it is asking for trouble. By running away, or edging in the direction of the square-leg umpire, it stands to reason you are much **more likely to be hit**, for in your one thought—and that a wrong one—of saving your body, you have probably forgotten everything about your bat, and so you are simply leaving yourself as a target. Also there is a very great danger of the ball hitting your pads and rebounding on to the wicket. The temptation to run away generally occurs when you see a rather **short fast ball** on or outside your legs. If you can make up your mind to be brave—and wise—you will move your right foot back into position, and, without hitting unnecessarily hard, give the ball

PLATE XIII
AN ON DRIVE
A. *Right*

This would have been a better stroke if it had not been for the left toe, which is not pointing sufficiently straight. Consequently, there is an awkward appearance with regard to the position of the left knee and hip.

In other respects, however, the shot is correct. The batsman appears to be rather a long way from the wicket, it is true, but he has had to come a little to the on side in order to make the stroke. Presumably there was a fielder round on the leg boundary, and the batsman's object was to avoid him by hitting the ball straighter.

Notice that the *left leg* has been *taken away* in the direction of Mid-on, so as to enable the bat and arms to swing *through unobstructed by the pads*.

The *weight* is well *forward* on the left leg and there is a good *full-shouldered finish* to the shot.

In all probability Long-on will have his work cut out to save the boundary.

B. *Wrong*

This is not quite a "cow" shot, because the finish of the bat has insufficient "kick" in it, and more forearm punch than shoulder swing has been employed. All the same, it is a thoroughly bad and very risky stroke, for the *left leg* has been put *in front of a straight ball* which was obviously *well up*, as the forward position of the front leg shows.

Moreover, only the *width* of the bat has been used, instead of the entire *length*. In other words, the rule of playing a *good-length ball on the legs* with a *straightish bat*, as opposed to a *flat* one, has been disregarded. In nine cases out of ten this method ends in disaster.

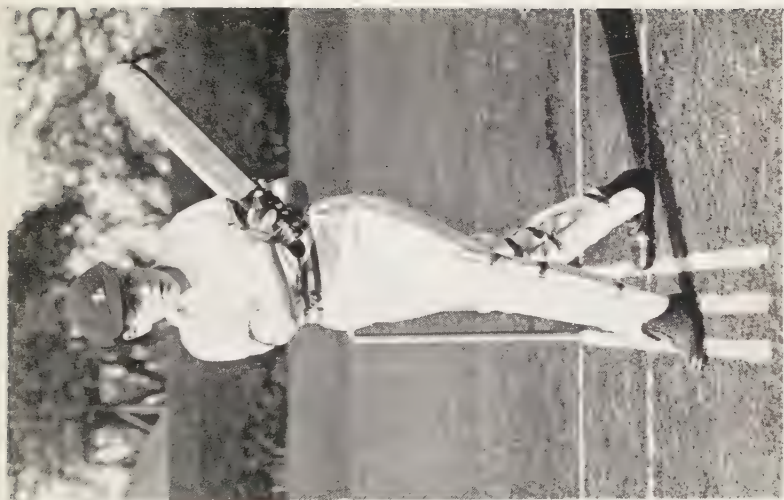


PLATE XIV



PLATE XIV

JUMPING OUT TO DRIVE

This photograph is a happy one in every way. The camera has struck at exactly the right moment, plainly showing the lead of the feet and the correct lift of the bat, consequent upon the release of the elbows from the sides. Finally, the expression on the batsman's face betokens a joyful anticipation of four runs, mingled, it would seem—judging from his tongue—with contempt for the obvious half-volley!

a tap sufficient to reach the boundary. Whatever you do, stand up, and don't let the bowler think you are in a funk ! Therefore—hard as it may seem at the beginning—try to take this to heart. If you don't, you will very soon learn your lesson in a more painful way.

So remember : (1) take your **left** foot right out of the way **with the toe pointing in the direction towards which you want to hit** ; (2) come well out to the ball with your head and body leaning forward and up on your toes ; (3) grip as near the top as you can ; and (4) hit straight and hard.

(4) **Running out to Drive.** When we were discussing the three drives a moment ago, we were talking of driving the ball which is delivered right up to you as a half-volley. But if you see a well-pitched-up ball coming slowly towards you in the air—this is commonly called a “**donkey drop**”—you can by all means take a few quick steps forward with both feet and turn it into a half-volley or full pitch. **But you must remember to go the whole way.** Don't begin to dance out and then suddenly think you can't do it. If you do, you will hit the ball on the late rise instead of just when it is leaving the ground, and the bowler will have caught you in the trap he has laid. For instead of hitting it hard and low, you

will spoon it high, as the bat will be on its upward course when it hits the ball.

Again, just because you have hit two of these balls running for four apiece, don't make up your mind **before the next one is bowled** that you can do the same thing again. It is more than likely that the bowler is a bit tired of these fours, and he will try to pitch this one shorter. If he does, and you see that you cannot possibly jump to it, go right back and **wait for it**. You will have plenty of time to place it, because we have said that he is a very slow bowler.

He may, of course, try you with a slow, high, full pitch. This is not a friendly action, when you first come in at any rate, so beware that you are not caught off the splice. Try and do your best with it, either by merely guarding your wicket or playing it gently. Later on you will probably get one which you can crack for four.

But in making these strokes remember once again that **everything depends upon your feet**. It is no good your making up your mind to jump out and hit if your feet aren't there first. Try, therefore, to get them clear away quickly. Then your bat can follow and do its work. If you try to let the bat lead, or even to do both things at the same time, you will get your pads and bat all jumbled

up together, and you will neither reach the ball in time nor will your balance be true.

II. **Back Play.** You have read how to step back with your right leg and deal with long hops, so we need not go into that again, and you know that when you get a good-length ball which you feel you can reach with safety, you play a forward defensive shot; but what are you to do if you see that a ball is not a long hop and yet you cannot reach out to play it, because it will pitch a little too short for you to do so with absolute safety?

This is where **back play for defence** comes in. I have said before that the position in which a person places **his feet, no matter what game he is playing**, is of tremendous importance. You can't play any game if you are off your balance, and that is why I have tried to impress upon you the necessity of getting that **left foot** to the ball in **all** your forward strokes. You will also remember that the right foot had a certain part to play, but now its *real* chance to spread itself is coming!—and I think you will see why you must be careful how you place it when you take up your stance.

Imagine yourself batting. You have taken up your position and the bowler is running up. You are remembering not to shuffle about, but instinctively

you keep lifting your bat a little, tapping the ground from time to time. "Here comes the ball—straight—I **can't** reach this one—I **must** go back. Lucky thing I did, too—I could never have smothered it, and also it turned a bit after it pitched—I hit it well in the middle too—so my eye is all right to-day."

What did you do when you made that stroke?

Directly you made up your mind—it was largely instinct that told you—that you must go back, you drew your right leg well back towards the middle stump—**watching that ball all the time before and after it left the ground.** Also, you lifted your bat **straight** back holding it loosely in the left hand, but allowing it to guide the right. When the ball reached a place half-way between your front and back leg, you brought the blade back again to the ball, perfectly straight and quite square to it. In order to get your bat straight, you lifted your left elbow well up and stood poised on your left toe, while your right hand held the bat between the finger and thumb. You had to do this to play the stroke properly, for since you went back instead of coming forward, you gave yourself a longer time to **see** the ball, which, therefore, was struck at a higher distance from the ground than it would have been had you been able to hit it just after it began to rise. Now, supposing that ball had pitched on or outside

PLATE XV

BACK PLAY FOR DEFENCE

Correct Position

Although you will probably use the forward stroke for defence more often than the back shot, because (1) more balls will be bowled up to you than those which are shorter ; (2) the pitch is more often fast than slow, and therefore the ball comes on the bat more quickly than when the wicket is wet ; and (3) it is more natural and perhaps easier to come forward than it is to go back, it has been said that there are many occasions when you will be *compelled to play back*.

Now this photograph shows the *right* position for the *back shot for defence*.

First of all, you will see that the *right* leg has *gone well back* towards the middle stump. This has been followed by the left foot, the heel of which is practically touching its neighbour. The *weight* of the body is *well back* on the *right leg* this time—the opposite, you see, of what happens in the forward stroke.

Notice particularly the *dead straight line of the bat* and the *high lift of the left elbow*. The *batsman's eyes* have been riveted on the *ball ever since it left the bowler's hand*.

PLATE XV





PLATE XVI

BACK PLAY FOR DEFENCE

Incorrect Position

I hope, if you have studied the previous photograph, in which the position is decidedly good, you will have no difficulty in seeing, at a glance, what is wrong in this one.

The initial cause of the failure lies in the fact that the *right foot has not been moved at all*.

Consequently, the left leg has also had to remain where it was.

The batsman is completely tucked up and *cannot possibly hold his bat straight*. This again brings out very clearly the question of *balance*, dependent—once more!—upon the *importance of foot work*.

Remember, that in making a *back shot* you have to *watch* where the ball goes *after it pitches*, and get your *right leg and bat directly behind it*.

How *can* this be done if you keep your feet where they were when the bowler was running up ?

the off stump instead of straight, would you have taken your right leg **straight back**? No—you would have stepped back so as to cover up the middle and off stump with your right leg—or even the off stump if the ball demanded it—so as to get practically behind it, and thus feel perfect control and at the same time maintain a sure balance.

CHAPTER IX

BATTING (*continued*)

The Out. I do not propose to deal with this stroke at any length, because I should strongly advise you not to attempt much cutting until you arrive at your Public School. It is a risky stroke for you to try until your wrists are strong enough to wield the bat with perfect safety. Also, it is a sound thing to remember, "**if you cut, cut properly, or else leave the ball alone.**" Until your wrists are thoroughly strong it cannot be called a paying stroke. More often it amounts to a gentle tap towards Third man, who has little difficulty in stopping and returning it, while there is a very great danger of **not getting on the top of the ball** and so giving an easy catch to Slip, or the Wicket-keeper. This type of stroke is known as the "late" cut, and is made off the long hop, which is rather more pitched up than usual and quite wide of the off stump. To make this stroke successfully the wicket must be a fast one. The right foot is moved back towards the off stump, and

PLATE XVII
THE LATE CUT

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and I have already said that you will be well advised to *leave the late cut alone until your wrists become stronger*, since there is nearly always an element of risk about this stroke.

If, however, you cannot resist the temptation to cut late, do remember the essential things in connection with it :—

1. That the *wicket* must be *fast*.
2. To put the *right leg* well to the off stump.
3. To lift the left heel.
4. To get *right on the top of the ball*.
5. To hit *downwards*.

It is a pretty stroke when successfully made, but I am inclined to think that the *safe drives* and shots with the *straight bat* are infinitely more effective.

PLATE XVII



PLATE XVIII



PLATE XVIII

THE FINISH OF A SQUARE CUT WITH THE LEFT LEG ACROSS

The camera has struck a fraction too late to show the position of the bat at the actual moment of hitting the ball, but there is plenty of "life" in the photograph, and evidently the stroke has been to the batsman's liking!

Here again the chalk lines show how far across he has planted the left leg. You will also notice that the balance has been well maintained even at the end of such a vigorous shot. The straightness of the left knee has much to do with this. How much safer—and eminently more elegant!—this stroke is than that in the previous picture. It would be interesting to know Point's feelings at this moment!

just as the ball has passed the right leg, the cross bat is brought **down on to it** with the wrists. It must be perfectly hit and the timing must be exactly right or you will get caught. It will be found a help to raise yourself on your toes in order to get extra height, for it is absolutely necessary to get **on the top of the ball** and to keep it down.

On the other hand, the "square" cut is a safer shot. In this case the ball travels past Point or between Point and Cover-point—not so "late" or "fine" as the late cut. This stroke can be made by putting either the left foot or right foot across, but you will be better advised to put the **left foot** across, because your weight will then be more forward, and therefore there will be **less risk of hitting the ball up**. Which-ever leg you put across, however, do remember that your object is to hit the ball down, and **don't try to cut balls which are straight**. That is where the danger lies. When you first "taste the blood," so to speak, of a successful cut, you will perhaps feel a thrill of pleasure at having discovered a new stroke. Now **don't try and repeat the stroke off the next ball if it is entirely unsuitable**. Try to remember that you have other far safer strokes at your command and it isn't worth getting yourself out through playing a risky shot.

It is far better really to rely upon the honest

forward and back strokes for your runs. You will get plenty of opportunities of scoring if you are content to wait. On the other hand, it will be too late to wish you had been a little more patient when you are walking back to the Pavilion.

CHAPTER X

BACKING UP—CALLING—RUNNING BETWEEN THE WICKETS

HERE are three difficult things for you to learn to do well, and it will take you quite a long time to become even fairly reliable. This is not to be wondered at, for almost every day in first-class cricket batsmen are run out owing to “misunderstandings” with their partners. In fact, there are very few who can be called quite blameless.

We will take **Backing up** to begin with, because that comes first in order.

You are at the bowler’s end, and your partner is to receive the ball. You stand wide of the pitch on the opposite side of the wickets to the bowler, holding your bat in one hand with your face turned towards him. Keep your bat just inside the forward crease. As soon as the ball has left the bowler’s hand, move forward, so that you will be ready to run as soon as your partner calls you—or you call him—as the case may be. We will see what this means in a minute. This is called “backing

up," and you will at once understand the advantage of it. If you are standing still—back on your heels—in your own crease, when a sharp run has to be made, you will not be ready to start quickly. Remember that your partner has probably started to run as soon as he calls you, and has therefore covered much of the distance to the wicket towards which he is running. Naturally he is relying upon you to back him up, and he has therefore judged that he has called you for a run which you, if you have not failed him, can also accomplish. Therefore make it a habit to move forward without thinking about it, directly you see the ball on its way.

Calling. If all batsmen called properly to each other we should very seldom see "Run out" appearing in the score-book. Sometimes, it is true, a "run out" is caused by an exceptional piece of dazzling fielding or a brilliant throw; but, on the other hand, many "run outs" are due, as we said just now, to "misunderstandings" between the striker and his partner. It is equally annoying and upsetting for both batsmen—perhaps even more so for the one who remains, if it was his fault that his partner was run out. The best he can say is "I'm awfully sorry," but he **feels** much more than this. He has presented a valuable wicket to his opponents—a miserable state of things.

PLATE XIX

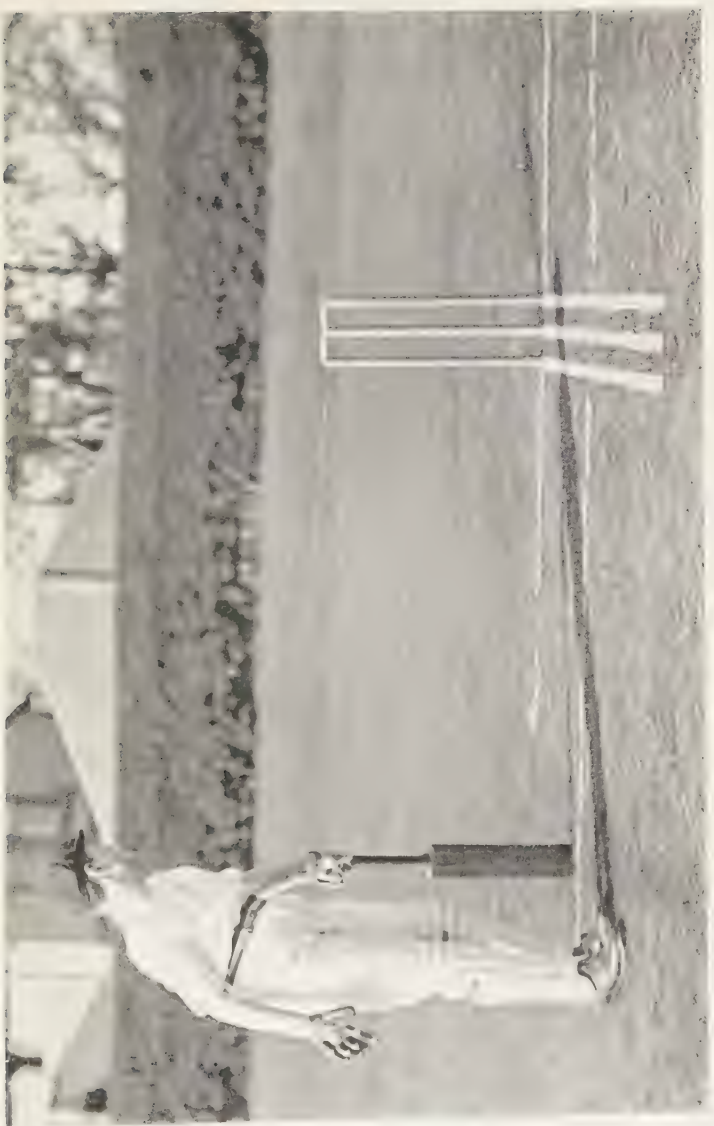
HOW TO BACK UP YOUR PARTNER WHEN BATTING

The idea of this picture is to show the way in which the striker's partner stands and holds the bat when the bowler is running up to the wicket.

Notice that he is *standing* quite *wide* of the pitch, so that when he actually starts to run *no damage will be done to the wicket by running down the middle of it*. Remember that this is part of the etiquette of cricket. *Never run* on the *part* upon which the *ball pitches*, unless you cannot possibly help doing so.

Also he has gained a yard or so by keeping his bat *behind* the line.

His eyes are fixed on the bowler, who has evidently what is known as a "round the corner" run up to the wicket!



How, then, shall we try to make calling as safe as possible ?

Under ordinary conditions there are **rules laid down for calling**. They are as follows :—

1. If the striker hits the ball in **front** of the wicket—he calls.
2. If he hits it **behind** the wicket, **his partner**, who is backing up, **calls**.
3. In the case of hits to Third man, the two batsmen generally arrange beforehand which of them shall call. (See Notes on “Fielding at Third Man,” p. 129.)
4. If the striker has lost sight of the ball, through overbalancing or some such cause, his partner shall call, directly he realises that the striker is unsighted—even though it would not ordinarily be the partner’s call.

These calls should—as far as possible—be limited to “**Yes**,” “**No**,” and “**Wait**,” the latter being a word of caution, so that when “**Yes**” or “**No**” follows, the other batsman may be ready to run. **They should also be loud and decisive. Don’t ever run without calling “Yes,” or “Come on,” or “Run.”** How can you expect your partner to come if he doesn’t know what you mean ?

Try to avoid “**Yes**” followed by a loud “**No**.”

By the time you have said "No," your unfortunate partner will be galloping towards you, and will often be run out before he can turn round and regain his crease.

Sometimes you hear the striker's partner call "No" in reply to the striker's "Yes," but, as a rule, he **ought** to run. It is only when he sees that the striker's call of "Yes" is utter folly, that he is justified in not running. Suppose, for instance, the striker has only just come in, and is rather anxious to break his duck. At the other end is a batsman upon whom a lot depends. The striker hits the ball hard and straight to a fielder fairly close in and calls "Yes." The other—for the good of his side—is absolutely right to shout "*No—get back.*"

Suppose, on the other hand, a very good batsman, who had been in for some time, suddenly lost his head and called his partner for an impossible run, then that partner should certainly run and risk losing his less valuable wicket—for the good of his side.

Running between the Wickets. Really good running between the wickets is a joy to watch and a perfect annoyance to the fielding side. If two batsmen get together who thoroughly understand one another, they will "steal" single after single, and help on the score enormously, besides possibly

making the fielders thoroughly wild ! When P. F. Warner's side went to Australia in the winter of 1911-12, they won four Test Matches running—a record for any English team in Australia. A great deal of their success was due to the splendid starts given them by Hobbs and Rhodes (you will notice that by this time the latter had accomplished his wish—"to bat *first* for England"). There was a perfect understanding between these two, and accounts tell us that their judgment of runs was so sure that they made apparently risky singles with the greatest ease. I am sure if you pay attention to your running, and remember that when you hit a ball rather wide to the **left** hand of a **right-handed thrower** that there is nearly always—if not *always*—a run, you will help your side's chances considerably. Also, if you receive a good-length ball which necessitates your playing it forward towards Extra-cover, or perhaps wide of Mid-on, there is very often a chance of scoring a safe and valuable single. But, in order to do this, you must (1) *decide quickly* that the stroke is possible ; (2) **push the ball gently and steadily** in the direction you intend ; (3) call your partner to "come one" **while you are actually making the stroke**, for you must remember that the fielder, unless he is asleep, has—owing to the kind of ball that has been bowled—anticipated your doing

PLATE XX

HOW TO RUN IN WITH THE BAT

This shows another thing that you must always remember, whether you are the striker or his partner, viz. to hold your bat in front of you and *run in with it along the ground*.

In this particular case, you can see that, although the batsman has been unable to reach the crease with his *feet*, he is nevertheless "in his ground." By *grounding* his bat during the last three or four yards of the run, he has been able to slide it over the line and has gained an appreciable distance by doing so. Remember that unless your bat is *touching* the ground you can be run out, provided that neither foot is behind the line. Therefore *don't* run in *waving your bat in the air*.

PLATE XX



PLATE XXI



PLATE XXI

BEGINNING TO MAKE A SECOND RUN

There is a sort of "touch and turn" element about this, and it shows, as I have written in the text, that when you are going to run *more than one*, you must make that *first run* both *as fast* and *as short as possible*.

In this photograph you will see that the batsman has not put his *feet* inside the crease at all. He is in the act of looking to see if it will be safe to call his partner for a second run or not.

something of this kind, and if he is worth his salt, he will be dashing in to try to run your partner out. So don't call **long after** you have made this stroke and **don't hit** but **push slowly**, *i.e.* more slowly than you would in the ordinary forward stroke. There is one golden rule to bear in mind: **Always run the first run as fast as you can**, whenever there is an outside chance of a second run. You can convert many singles into twos by doing this, and **one** extra run may win a match.

Don't cross your partner when running—the striker keeps to the off side and his partner to the leg—unless, of course, a bowler is bowling round the wicket. Then the sides are reversed. Also, **run wide of the wicket—never down the middle of it**. Don't run right past the crease when you are going to run more than one. Reach forward and *ground your bat* inside the crease and then turn and get back as quickly as you can.

CHAPTER XI

BOWLING

General Remarks

WHAT is the use of having a side which can make a big score if you haven't got a bowler or two who can get your opponents out for less? In other words, if you are going to win matches, it is largely your bowlers who will do it.

Therefore I am going to ask those of you who have Batting nearest your heart, to try **Bowling** as well. If you can do **both**, you will be doubly worth your place in the side, and should you not contribute a big score in a match, you may make amends by winning it through your bowling.

Now, there are some boys who think they *can't* bowl. This is not altogether true. **Nearly everyone can bowl a little**, and it is a confession of weakness to say you can't. I do not say that everyone can bowl well enough to be put on in an important match, but real bowlers have been discovered sometimes in this way.

I well remember a match in the Parks at Oxford when the South Africans were playing the University in 1904. Things were going well for the South Africans, and, in view of other matches to come, the fast bowler, J. J. Kotze, whose pace had been too much for the majority of the Oxford batsmen, was given a rest. The ball was thrown to R. O. Schwarz with a good deal of chaff from the rest of the side, as he was playing solely for his batting. He proceeded to bowl some of the deadliest overs I have ever seen, in which the "**googly**"—the off break with the leg-break action—played a very prominent part. From memory, his analysis was five wickets for about 20 runs.

After this he was recognised as one of the leading bowlers of the side, and in later tours, both in England and in Australia, he worked havoc in the Test Matches.

It is rather the custom to hear people say: "A bowler is born—not made." There is a certain amount of truth in this, because you cannot become a bowler unless you have some spark of aptitude for bowling—to say the least of it. For instance, you have to possess infinite patience, to practise very hard, and be able to use your head. That a batsman can make himself a bowler as well, is proved by the case of M. Falcon—the Norfolk Captain and old

Cambridge "Blue." Both at Harrow and at Cambridge his batting was always recognised, and he quickly obtained his "Blue" on this account. And yet in a very short time he was *bowling* the Players out at Lord's! That was achieved, I know, by real hard practice.

I quote these two instances to show what can be done if you set your mind to it. In Schwarz's case he had practised this "googly" bowling under the eye of B. J. T. Bosanquet, the inventor of this particular kind of ball.

Before we start discussing the vital things which a match-winning bowler must possess, we will begin with a few general hints.

When you have bought your outfit for batting, ask for a cricket ball next. Take care that you do not get one with $5\frac{1}{2}$ ounces stamped on it—you want a smaller-sized one, weighing $4\frac{3}{4}$ ounces, and also get the best one you can. It will be much better to bowl with, the seam will be well stitched, and it will keep its shape far longer than a cheap one. When you get home, and before you begin to practise your bowling, measure out the length of your pitch accurately. If you have not done much bowling before, 18 yards will be enough. As you get older you will increase this to 21 yards, but wait until you are about fourteen years old before you

bowl on the full-length pitch, viz. 22 yards. Boys who would have made a name as bowlers later on, **have been entirely ruined by being overbowled when young.**

If you can get hold of someone who knows how to bowl to advise you when beginning, it will be an enormous help to you, because, although you must not, of course, become an absolute machine, there are some parts of your bowling which will not vary at all. If, however, you disregard these, you will do yourself a lot of harm and will never obtain that supreme confidence which every bowler should try to possess.

One of the first things you must practise is a **good lively run up** to the wicket. A slack, sloppy run is to be avoided like poison. Have you ever seen J. W. H. T. Douglas bowling? If you have, you must have noticed the determination which he puts into it. There is nothing slovenly about *his* run! Suppose, then, that you have been fortunate enough to get the advice of someone to put you into the way of things. This is probably what he will say: "Just bowl a ball or two at that wicket and let's have a look at you." After this he may tell you that you don't want all that long run up to the wicket—you may have been watching Hitch or someone and have thought you would like to bowl

like him. Or else he may think your run is not long enough, and tell you to start further back. This matter of your run is **most important**, for if you do not begin to run up to the wicket properly when you are young, you will find it very difficult to alter it afterwards—you will always be **thinking** about it as you run up. If you go to a county ground and walk out to the ropes guarding the pitch during an interval, you will see that most bowlers put their feet in **exactly the same places** every time they run up. There is a series of worn patches all the way up from where they begin their run. This is because they have practised their run until it has become a habit with them.

If you can avoid it, I should not make this run of yours longer than you can possibly help—I would suggest 6 to 8 yards as a good average. If you feel you can't get up "steam," so to speak, in that distance, try a little more, but I shouldn't make it much longer if I were you—and not shorter either. What you want to feel is, that you will have sufficient impetus when you deliver the ball to enable you to get every ounce out of your swing. So much for a start.

The next thing you may be told is, that when you are actually delivering the ball, your arm is inclined to be low, and also that you are not making enough

use of your body. If you are going to be a bowler you **must keep your arm up**. It is quite extraordinary what a difference this makes to the way in which the ball comes off the pitch. If you are tired, your arm is inclined to get low, and you feel that the ball is leaving the pitch so slowly that the batsman is having no difficulty at all in playing you. On the other hand, if the ball is delivered from a height, it "**fizzes**" off the pitch full of "fire" and liveliness, and compels the batsman to make up his mind in a hurry as to how he will play it.

When he was Captain of Gloucestershire, W. G. Grace used frequently to be heard saying to Roberts, his chief bowler: "Keep your arm up, Fred, keep your arm up."

How is your body going to help you to bowl? When you are going to make a great effort to throw a ball extra distance, don't you take your hand, with the ball in it, as far back as you can? Why do you do this? Simply because you feel you must broaden your chest to its fullest extent, so that you will get the most you can out of yourself. If you bowl with your arms alone, *i.e.* with practically no swing, the effort will be very great and your length uncertain. Unfortunately, one of the greatest bowlers there has ever been—J. T. Hearne of Middlesex—has long since retired from first-class cricket, but if you go

to Lord's, you will probably find him bowling at the nets, and you will go home wishing you had that lovely action and command of the ball. But what you should not fail to notice, is the way in which he opens his chest at the top of his swing. If you were to ask him, he would tell you that that has always been one of the secrets of his success in bowling.

When you have bowled the ball, don't check yourself as if you had finished. **Follow right through** and round and run on a few paces up the wicket. This will help you to add that little bit of extra "fizz" we talked about just now, and, should the batsman return you a catch, you will be in a better position to accept it.

One last word before we come to details. **It is a fatal thing to keep on trying "fancy" actions.** This is one of the dangers of watching first-class cricket. A great many boys, fired with zeal from having watched a bowler who has taken their fancy, try to imitate his style, his run, and action. This is a great mistake. Your own run and action suit you best, and you will, in all probability, lose confidence in yourself if you start playing tricks of this kind.

CHAPTER XII

BOWLING (*continued*)

AND now for a few words to those of you who are going to win matches by your bowling.

What are the things which contribute most largely to the success of a bowler ?

Briefly they are these :—

1. LENGTH ; 2. BRAIN ; 3. SPIN ; 4. PRACTICE ;
5. LUCK.

Let us take these separately and try to see how each of them comes in.

1. **Length.** In the same way that we hear so much about the Straight Bat in Batting, so the word **length** is for ever associated with Bowling. The reason is not far to seek. Unless you can pitch the ball where you want, you will find you are hit all over the field, for you will probably serve up a collection of full pitches, long hops, and half-volleys, and invite the batsman to score as many runs as he pleases.

This, then, is why so much is made of length. If you have read the chapter on Batting you will know what is meant by the good-length ball, but perhaps it would be as well just to refer to it briefly again.

A ball is said to be of a **good length** when the batsman is compelled either to come right forward or else go right back in order to defend his wicket. From his position at the crease he can neither drive it nor hook it.

It is over this **length** then that you bowlers **must** become the masters. And how are you to attain this? The answer is summed up in two words—**by practice**. Other gifts of bowling, such as spin, pace, fire, come to us from Nature, but if you cannot combine length with them they are wasted.

There are various ways in which you might practise **this** all-important length. The best way of all would be to put a series of batsmen in a net and bowl an over or two at them one after the other. You would soon discover, according to their different reaches and varying methods, what was the right length to bowl to each.

So you see you cannot put down a blob of whitening and think that if you hit this every time you will know how to bowl a good length to *everybody*. For if you are a *fast* bowler, for example,

your good-length ball will have to pitch further back, owing to the pace at which it will leave the ground. At the same time it would be very excellent practice, as we shall see in a moment, for acquiring **control** over the ball and teaching you to pitch it as you wanted.

But, unfortunately, you cannot always get batsmen to go and stand for you to bowl at them. So you ask a fellow-bowler to come and practise with you. **You can get quite a lot of fun out of this besides a good deal of help.** Put three stumps up at each end and carefully measure out 18 or 21 yards—according to the distance you usually bowl. Now, take a bat, and, standing in the place where the crease would be, play forward at the “**blind**” spot, *i.e.* the place at which you would hit a real ball. Get your friend to make a mark with whitewash a little in front of where your bat now is—in other words, on the spot where you would judge that a good-length ball would pitch. Then, from this spot, draw a line parallel to the crease but slightly shorter. You might also draw one a little further away from the wicket and one a very little closer to it. The furthest one might be taken as the place where the good-length ball for the far-reaching batsman would pitch, the middle one for batsmen of average reach, and the nearest one as the spot for the good-length

ball when the wicket is slow. Do the same at the other end.

Now bowl imaginary overs, both of you, and having named the ball you intend to bowl, you can, for example, score one if you hit the line at which you aimed, and an additional one if you hit the wicket as well. If you hit the line but miss the wicket, you score one only. If you merely hit the wicket you can also score one, provided that the ball was not a long hop or full pitch. You can have a penalty for a long hop, full pitch, etc., since it is not a matter of striking the stumps with rotten length balls that you are practising. You understand, I expect, that if the wicket is slow the ball will not come off the pitch as quickly as if it were fast. Consequently, the spot where the good-length ball pitches under these conditions is considerably nearer the batsman. Remember that the good-length spot is not *just* in front of the bat—when you play forward. If it were, you would be able to play the half-volley shot. It is a little further from the bat than this, so do not make your good-length mark *too* close to it. All the same it is a golden rule to remember to **pitch the ball up rather than short.** **One half-volley is worth several long hops.** You can always tell when you are bowling well and when you are not—the score board is generally proof of

this too—but there are some days when you “feel like it,” and others when, try as hard as you can, you simply cannot get a length. Sometimes on occasions like these it is a **good plan to change ends**. This often works wonders.

While we are on the subject of length, we might also talk about direction. Good-length balls, which are not straight, will often get wickets, but for your success you have largely to thank the batsman for hitting the ball into the air and the fielder for catching it. If you are to get the batsman out by your own efforts alone, **you must aim at hitting the wicket**, and this brings us to an unwritten rule which I certainly think is a very sound one: **At least five balls in every over should be bowled with the idea of hitting the wicket**. Nothing is more boring to the fielding side than to feel that a bowler has **no object** in what he is doing. Long hops—too wide of the wicket for the batsman to reach—are served up one after the other, and they are all saying to themselves: “Pitch them up, for goodness’ sake—let’s have *something* to do at any rate.” It is always sound policy to **pitch the ball well up and aim it very straight when a new batsman comes in**. We are all human, and he is most probably very nervous. He is dreading having to walk back to the Pavilion with a big round O staring him in the face,

and if you keep bowling the ball up to him and persist in your straightness as well, it will add to his uneasiness, for he knows that you are making him "play" you, and that if he misses the ball he will have to go, while if he hits it on the edge he will probably be caught by Slip.

CHAPTER XIII

BOWLING (*continued*)

2. **Brain.** Fast bowlers largely depend upon their pace, combined with length, direction, and a natural off break for their wickets; but slower bowlers are compelled to use their wits, in addition to length and direction, in order to be successful.

Length, as we saw a moment ago, is essential for a bowler's success, but if you were "just a good-length bowler" and nothing more, you could never hope to go through a whole side, although you would sometimes do very valuable work by breaking-up a partnership or giving your regular bowlers a well-earned rest.

Therefore it is obvious that something more is wanted besides bowling like a perfect machine. It is here that the **good-length bowler with a head on his shoulders** comes in. He begins perhaps with an over of rather ordinary stuff—varying his pitch and direction slightly, in the hope of discovering some weak spot in his opponent's armour. As he is a

person of some intelligence, he has probably detected one or two weak spots during the time when the bowler, whom he has now relieved, was performing. Perhaps he saw that the batsman was not very clever at getting his left foot right across to the ball outside the off stump—perhaps he seemed rather shaky when playing the ball to leg. What does he do in his second over? He asks his Captain if he may bring a man over from the leg side and put him at second Slip. Then he bowls two or three plain length balls again. The fourth one is rather wide of the off stump. The batsman comes forward, but his left leg is too straight, his bat is likewise crooked, and he hits the ball with the outside edge and is caught by one of the Slips.

Or again, he may move his second Slip over to short leg. A few balls later he drops one, which is slightly short of a good length, just on or outside the leg stump. He has the satisfaction of seeing it placed into the safe hands of the man on the leg side. Next, the hitter of the side comes in. This batsman has perhaps a good eye, but only one stroke—the drive with a crooked bat. The bowler puts a man rather deep round on the leg side and tells Mid-on and Mid-off to drop back a little. Then he tosses up one or two nice tempting balls for him to slap at, and in a few minutes the slogger is on his

way back to the Pavilion, caught in the trap laid for him on the leg boundary. We will take one more example of "head work."

This time the wicket is very "sticky," that is to say, having been wet before, it is drying under the rays of a hot sun, and the ball is taking the break and turning quickly after pitching. Our bowler notices that the batsman is trying to come out and smother everything he possibly can. Once or twice he has nearly had him caught and bowled. Evidently he is not very clever at playing back; therefore he bowls him one a **little shorter**, which will pitch just on the off stump and on which he has put off break. Out scrapes the batsman as before, daylight showing between his bat and his left leg. He cannot reach far enough to smother the break—the ball beats the bat and he is bowled.

These are imaginary instances, and in every case fortune has favoured our bowler! But you will readily see that such things and many others may easily happen, and that guile, combined with accuracy, must be tried if you are to achieve your object as a slow bowler.

CHAPTER XIV

BOWLING (*continued*)

3. **Spin.** We have said that the essential thing for a bowler to possess is *length*, and that without this not even the brainiest cricketer, nor he who can make the ball twist in the most extraordinary way after it pitches, will ever be able to say that he can bowl. But it has also been shown that if you can only bowl a length and have no other tricks up your sleeve, you can never rise to any greater heights than those of a useful change bowler. We are not considering the fast bowler now, because we have said that he *does* possess an additional advantage, viz. his pace.

Clearly, then, if you are to become a really good slow or medium-pace bowler, length and brain must be supplemented by something else.

That which makes the difference between the "ordinary length bowler" and the bowler who goes "through" a side, is called "Spin" or "Break."

Now every one—be he right-handed or left—has

a little **natural spin**. It is quite a difficult thing to throw or bowl a ball overhand and make it go on absolutely straight after it pitches. It practically always turns a little from its original course, even if it is only a matter of an inch or two. When a right-hander bowls you up a ball, you find it finishes in your hand a little to the left of where you expected, *i.e.* a right-hander breaks slightly from left to right; the left-hander has the opposite twist. Consequently, a right-hander would hit the middle stump if he pitched the ball on the off stump, while the left-hander would have to pitch it on the middle to hit the off. This is because the hand in which the ball is held, turns outwards when the ball is delivered.

To increase this natural spin and so make the ball break more, you generally hold it with the fingers along the **seam**, because you get a better grip of it in this way and can twist the ball more readily than you can on the shiny surface.

The leg break, on the other hand, is not a natural one for a right-hand bowler, and to be able to bowl it well you want long, sensitive fingers and lots of practice. This is, of course, the opposite to the off break, *i.e.* the right-hander pitches on the leg stump to hit the middle, and the left-hander on the middle to hit the leg. You will at once see that the ball, from the time when it leaves your

hand, must therefore be spinning in exactly the opposite way to what it is when the off break is bowled. "Leg" spin is chiefly put on by the **third finger**, and when the ball is delivered, the hand turns over from right to left in the case of the right-hander, while the elbow is kept further away from the body than it was when the off break was bowled. There are so many different ways, however, of imparting spin in either direction, that it is difficult to lay down any hard and fast rules beyond those mentioned. Your best way to learn to spin the ball is to practise with a soft ball, such as a tennis ball or a "stump" cricket ball first, and then, when you have understood how you have made it twist at your special bidding, you can try what you can do with a small cricket ball.

But, whatever you do, **don't let your eagerness to acquire spin ruin your length**. Remember **length** must always come first. I would even urge you to be content to wait for "spin" till you get to your Public School, rather than arrive there with no control over length. By that time, too, your fingers will be stronger. But no harm is done by finding out meanwhile *how* to put on spin.

Don't think that spin *only* means that you can make the ball break so that it gets past the batsman and therefore bowls him. It has an even greater

PLATE XXII

A. HOW TO HOLD THE BALL FOR AN OFF BREAK

I have said that there are so many different ways of imparting spin or break that it is difficult to lay down definite rules as to how to spin the ball. Some spin it off one finger, others off another. It is for this reason that I have suggested that you should try what you can do with a "stump" cricket ball before practising with a small cricket ball proper.

To make the ball break from the off, however, you must hold the ball with the wrist in the position shown, *i.e.* facing the batsman. Notice that the fingers are holding the seam. This will help their grip considerably.

B. HOW TO HOLD THE BALL FOR A LEG BREAK

When you see the bowler's hand turn over from right to left in the manner shown in this picture, and the ball comes out of it spinning from the same direction, you will, as a batsman, know what to expect. While the "leg" break, if well bowled, can be a very deadly one and will often take wickets, it is also a very difficult one for a bowler to master and is apt to be more expensive than the "off" break, which is the natural one for a right-hander. Since it can hardly ever be bowled fast, perfect length combined with this spin is absolutely essential.

PLATE XXII



value than that. I said sometime back that one of the first things you must take care to practise is a *lively* run up to the wicket. You want to follow that up and try to make your *bowling* lively as well. You may deliver the ball fairly fast on to the ground, but remember that when it hits the pitch, a certain amount of "way" is taken off it, and unless you have, beforehand, given it something extra to help it on its second and more important part of the journey, it will arrive, so to speak, rather tired and lifeless.

But not if you have added "*spin*." With this additional help, it will gather pace after it pitches, and not only will it break enough to beat the bat perhaps, but it will do it in **great haste** as well.

You all know the two great Sussex bowlers, A. E. R. Gilligan, the Captain, and Tate. Of the two, Gilligan is by far the faster on to the pitch, but it was agreed by the best judges last year that Tate's bowling came so quickly off the pitch, that he was actually faster than his Captain in this respect. That is, of course, a great natural gift which Tate possesses, but finger spin has a lot to do with it as well.

You can now understand, perhaps, why it was that he got so many wickets and did such wonderful performances last year. Think of that over of his in the Trial Match at Lord's! If you have

forgotten the details, look them up in your *Wisden* for 1924.

What does he keep on doing the whole time ? He compels the batsman to "play" him—either reaching forward to the "blind spot," to smother that deadly spin, or going right back on to the stumps—watching the ball all the time, like a cat watches a mouse, except that the cat's job is infinitely easier !

CHAPTER XV

BOWLING (*continued*)

4. **Practice.** There are a few lucky people who can put their bats away at the end of September, and one fine day in the following month of May wake up and say: "By Jove! I'm playing cricket to-day—I must find my cricket bag." Having discovered it, they pack their flannels and go and make 50 or 100! I have seen some heaven-born golfers, with the remains of cobwebs sticking to their clubs, go out and play like Harry Vardon at his best. But, unluckily, Fortune smiles upon very few in this way, and we nearly all of us find that we cannot play *any* game unless we practise.

Now bowling requires more **practice** than any other part of cricket. During the winter months our muscles are apt to get stiff after all the exercise we have given them in the summer, and we find when we begin to try to bowl, we can't get what we call our "**action**"—we have little or no idea of how to pitch that length that we found comparatively

easy last year—and we have the feeling that we have “lost” our bowling. Don’t be disheartened if you experience something of this kind. Begin by bowling a **few overs** only each day to start with, and rather more slowly than you usually would. In three or four days—if the sun shines and gets into your joints—you will begin to feel you have got it all back. You might, perhaps, go in to *bat* and make some runs without practice, though, naturally, you would seize an opportunity of net practice if you could get it, but you cannot go and *bowl* without practice. It would be far too expensive an experiment, for you would simply give away four after four and generally feel hopelessly at sea. Therefore, when you are going to bowl for your side in a match, take out a ball beforehand and bowl a **few** balls down. We often see people go out to “have a knock” before the game begins, but **how few go out to “bowl one or two down.”** The majority seem to take it for granted that they will get their length straightaway, and yet a *batsman* likes to get a “sight of the ball” before *he* goes in.

One final word about practising your bowling. **Bowl for all you are worth while you are at it—**just as you would in a match. The batsman in the net is batting for all he is worth, so what good will you do yourself if you get slack and bowl anyhow?

Take frequent rests, too—you will get one at the end of each over in a match—and don't overdo it; otherwise how will you face your opponents to-morrow with that sure confidence that you can get them out ?

CHAPTER XVI

BOWLING (*continued*)

5. **Luck.** Apart from the actual good we do for our side, we all love bowling ; there is no denying that. Haven't we all noticed, when we go to watch a county match, that whenever a wicket falls, two batsmen, who are not considered to be bowlers, seize upon the ball and practise their bowling, each one trying to out-spin the other ? Or again, when there is a long stand and the Captain has tried many changes without success, how often do we see people all over the field swinging their arms as much as to say, " Why not put *me* on ? "

Yet, delightful as it is to bowl—it *can* be perfectly exasperating ! There are some days when, although you are bowling really well, things *will* not go right. You miss hitting a crack batsman's leg stump in his first over with your fast yorker by a hair's breadth—then Slip drops a catch plumb into his " mouth "—other catches fall just short of a fielder time after time—perfectly maddening ! You think to yourself,

“We should have had four or five of them out by now with ordinary luck—now they’ll probably go and make hundreds.”

These are things you have to fight against, and you won’t do yourself, or your side, any good by giving way or by losing your temper; on the other hand, you may possibly do yourself and them a lot of harm. As they say in war reports, “Morale is shaken!” If you think of it, you have been doing your side a great service by this steady bowling, even though your name has not appeared in the score book. You have kept the runs down and also you have upset the batsman’s confidence. He has been scraping forward, and without much success, for he has been missed once and has also made many uppish strokes. In addition to this, you have been making it easier for the bowler at the other end.

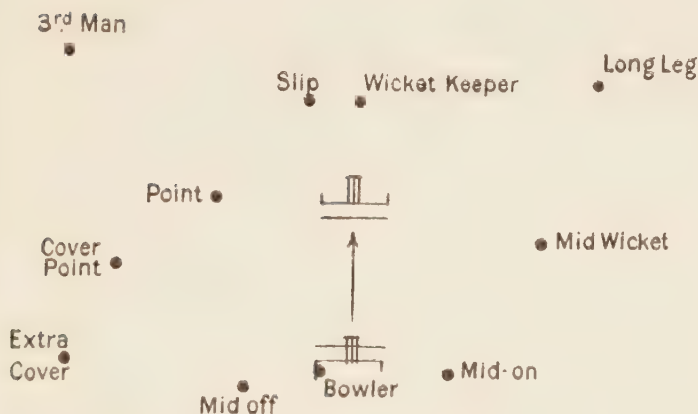
Therefore, try to take this lack of fortune as all part of the day’s work; you must concentrate all your thoughts upon the task in hand—just like a batsman—if you are to succeed, and remember that **you won’t bowl well if you lose your temper**. To blame Slip because he missed that catch, would be childish. He will be the first to come and tell you he is sorry. If you blame him for it, he will, in all probability, miss the next. Fielding in the slips is a nervous business at any time.

Another thing : before you begin to bowl, have a good look round to see that **all your fielders are in their places**, and that they are **quite ready**. Cover-point may be doing up a bootlace, and you can't blame him if he misses a catch under those conditions. As soon as the batsmen have started to run, **get back to your wicket as soon as you can**—one of them might slip, and you would be annoyed with yourself if you had missed a chance of running him out.

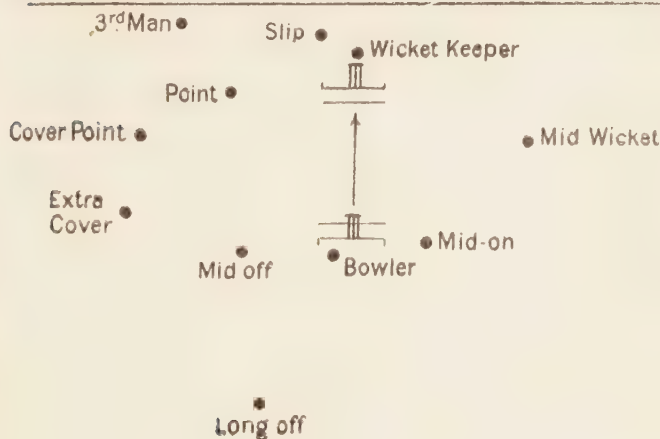
So don't let yourself think "what rotten luck" you are having and that you will never succeed—there's nothing like self-confidence in any game. The great Lancashire bowler, Walter Brearley, used to think he could get *anyone* out, and, if he was properly hit for four, he used to say : "Well hit !" That's the spirit in which to bowl.

Your luck—if so you like to call it—will turn all right. Sooner or later you will get a wicket with a rotten long hop or half-volley, or with a yorker, which you had no intention of bowling. Finally, even if you are boiled to the world, if your Captain asks you to "have another go that end," you must be ready, if you have any "kick" at all left in you, to do what he asks ; and remember to **try, try, try**, all the time for your side and your School.

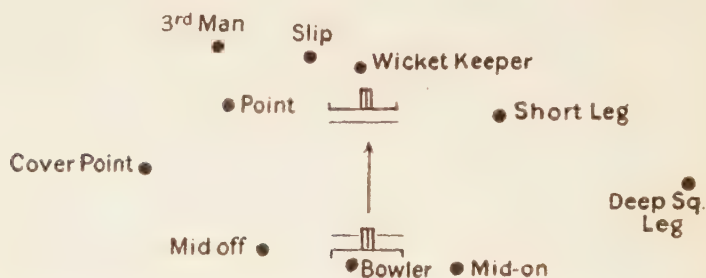
PLAN OF THE FIELD FOR A FAST RIGHT HAND BOWLER.



PLAN OF THE FIELD FOR A MEDIUM PACED RIGHT HAND BOWLER.



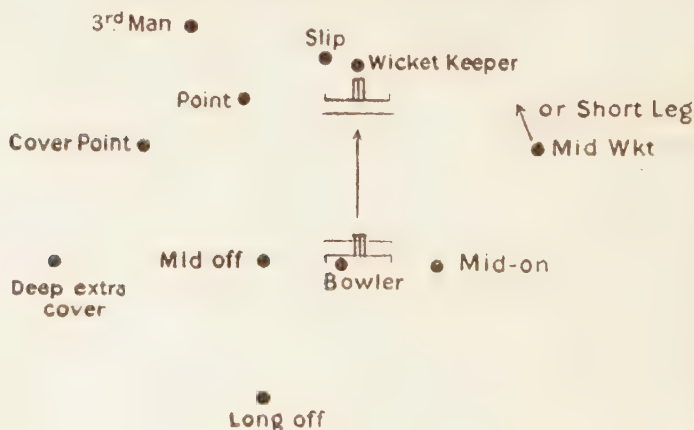
PLAN OF THE FIELD FOR A RIGHT HAND LEG BREAK BOWLER.



(3rd Man might be taken away and an extra Man placed between long on and deep Sq leg. Point might stand a little "finer")

● Long on

PLAN OF THE FIELD FOR A LEFT HAND BOWLER.



CHAPTER XVII

FIELDING

General Remarks

IT is true that bowlers may actually hit the stumps ten times in an innings, and so bring about the dismissal of a whole side by their own efforts; but these occasions are very rare, and you will generally find the names of three or four, or even more fielders who have aided them by their catching. In addition to this, there are, of course, many whose names do not appear in the score book, because they have not actually had a catch hit to them, but who have, nevertheless, earned applause again and again for their cleverness in stopping the ball and saving two runs here and a boundary there. Remember that the **saving of four runs means that your side have four less to make, if you are batting second.**

Now perhaps Fielding does not appeal to some of you very much. "It's all right for you bowlers," you say, "but we've got to stop and fetch for you, while you have all the fun." Not a bit of it. This

is a very selfish view to take of things, and if you will only realise you are part and parcel of your *side*, and may at any moment render it extremely valuable service, you won't let feelings like this come over you.

Next time you go to Lord's, watch Hendren in the field. He is not a regular bowler, and though he made thirteen centuries last year, even *he* fails to score sometimes. Does *he* ever look as if he was "fed up"? Watch him fielding at "slip" or in the "country"—always **on his toes**—always looking out for that opportunity, which may come at *any* moment, to make a catch off Durston in the slips or sprint 30 yards to save Hearne being hit for four.

We have seen him run out to field as a substitute before the man whom he was going to relieve had reached the Pavilion. Here, then, is one who loves Fielding—an example for many of us to imitate.

If you go to the Oval you will find another—Hitch, the Surrey bowler. When he is bowling—and he takes a long run, which would tire many men more quickly than it does him—he puts every ounce of energy into it, and yet when his over is finished, he is off to his place at Short-leg, where his fielding is so famous. Watch him there—look at him standing in a place which it would be dangerous for some people to occupy—notice how quick he is to anticipate, before the ball is hit, where it will probably go.

Can you ever after this think Fielding is *dull*? If, then, you are going to get into your school XI., one of the first things you must practise is your fielding. You get plenty of opportunities during your spare time—don't for ever be out with that bat of your's—give it a rest sometimes and practise your catching and throwing. No XI., least of all a school XI., can afford to have a “passenger” in the field. We have so often heard the remark, “We can't play So-and-So, he's such a rabbit in the field.” On the other hand, you may get your colours almost solely **for your fielding.**

It is rather the custom—especially when you are young—to “grouse” when your Captain loses the toss and your opponents choose to bat first. It certainly is generally an advantage to have “first knock,” because the wicket is nice and new and there are no places on it from which the ball may, later on, do funny things. Also, if you can give your opponents a good leather hunting first, they will be rather tired by the time it is their turn to bat. But I am afraid this is not always the reason for rather long faces when your Captain has lost the toss—it is the feeling of “having to go out and field” which is the cause.

Have you ever seen the Somerset side in the field? If you haven't, you have missed something worth seeing. They all appear to be so delighted to be

there, that one is almost inclined to think that they must thank their Captain—J. Daniel—to whom they owe so much, for the example he sets them, whenever he loses the toss ! Take the Australians too—they are the best of all to watch, because one and all are good fielders. You *have* to be in Australia, where you don't get the batsman out as often as he gets *himself* out, so plumb are the wickets. People flock to our county grounds to see the Australians field. They like to see them bat, of course, but the majority are glad if they find them *in the field* when they arrive at the ground.

What is it that is so attractive about them ? It is their quickness and their clever catching, but, most of all, their beautiful throwing. Watch W. Bardsley, for instance, throw the ball from near the boundary railings full pitch to the Wicket-keeper at a beautiful height, apparently without the slightest effort.

CHAPTER XVIII

FIELDING (*continued*)

Now let us take a few places in the field where the "specialists"—if so we may call them—are.

1. **Cover-point.** Since this is about the most difficult place in which to field in front of the wicket, we will make a start by saying that it is no use to put a moderate fielder in this position. Nor again is it sufficient for a Cover-point to be a safe catch or a good "stopper." Both of these qualifications are, of course, vitally important, but unless you are very quick on your feet and also a very good thrower, you can never hope to make a name for yourself as a Cover-point. It was by reason of their possessing these great advantages that G. L. Jessop and S. E. Gregory, the Australian, were so famous, and in these days Hobbs is England's Cover.

A Cover-point has more to do than merely to stop the ball. He has to cover a great deal of ground—moreover, **he has to save runs.** If a batsman sees that Cover-point is always on his

toes and also that he can throw, he thinks twice before calling his partner for a short run to him. Quite a lot of Cover-points "establish a funk" in this way. On the other hand, if you see Cover-point standing well back on his heels, with his arms folded, there is a safe run nearly every time to him.

The best way for you to be "on your toes" is by **walking in a few paces as the ball is bowled**. Therefore, as the bowler is going back to his starting-place, you also walk back an extra 5 or 6 yards. By this method you cannot be caught napping. Now about the throwing. It is obvious that if a batsman calls his partner for a run to Cover-point the ball must be travelling slowly, since Cover does not stand a very long way from the pitch. Therefore the striker thinks that both he and his partner can reach their creases before the ball is returned to either wicket. So Cover-point's one chance—if, indeed, there is one—is to be able to pick up the ball **while he is running in** and throw it in at lightning speed. If he takes *both* hands to it, he will be obliged to transfer it to his throwing hand before he can return it. This would entail a loss of time. Therefore the picking up must be done by the throwing hand alone. Again, supposing he picked it up with this hand in a crouching position—as he must be—and then had to raise himself so as to be able to throw

it, by bringing his hand *over* the back of his shoulder, there would also be loss of time and the batsmen would have reached their creases. So a good Cover-point throws **from the same position as that in which he picked the ball up, i.e.** with a **low-wrist throw** from the crouching position with his throwing hand *under* the shoulder. We sometimes see him roll it in very fast underhand like a village blacksmith's Saturday afternoon "grub." These "returns," as they are called, are best if they are sent as catches, because no time is lost by hitting the ground, as in the case of a long hop, but it requires a tremendous amount of practice to become good. A wild return, however quick, may mean four overthrows, whereas a little more aim and less loss of head might have meant that a really good batsman was on his way to the Pavilion.

There are occasions when you are perfectly justified in having a shy on your own at the wicket, even when no one is there to stop it should you miss. For example, the Wicket-keeper, if he were standing back, or the bowler might not have been able to get to their respective wickets in time. Four runs are four runs it is true, but what are four runs compared with the golden chance of running out a player who seems to have taken root for ever? Of course, there **should always be someone at the**

PLATE XXIII

THROWING IN FROM COVER-POINT WITH THE HAND BELOW THE SHOULDER

This represents the piece of fielding with one hand and the position for the quick return, by bringing back the throwing hand *below* the shoulder, which it is so necessary for every good Cover-point to cultivate. It is all important that the *two motions*, (1) of *picking up* the ball, and (2) of *returning it* with the utmost speed, should be *as nearly simultaneous as possible*. Hence any undue *raising of the body* or tendency to throw from *above* the shoulder wastes valuable seconds and increases the batsmen's chances proportionately.

PLATE XXIII



wicket, and also another fielder to back him up should he misfield the ball. Backing up is one of the first principles of Fielding. Remember that if you are bowling and the batsman calls his partner for a run, it is your duty to get back at once to your wicket in readiness for the return throw. The same rule applies if you are a Wicket-keeper. Never mind how far back you are standing, you must run up to the stumps as quickly as you can. **The wickets must never be left unguarded.** Should the Wicket-keeper have to run after the ball, then Point or Slip must take his place for the time being.

But this is not all. There must also be a second line of defence, so to speak; in other words, there must be a man to back up the fielder to whom the ball is thrown, in case of accidents. Have you ever been present at a County Match when extra runs were made owing to an overthrow? If you have, can't you even now, as you read these pages, almost hear the *roar* that went up! That roar was partly one of sheer joy from the supporters of the Batting side, but it was also one of *derision* for the Fielding side—because one and all of the crowd knew that **someone** ought to have darted across to back up the man who misfielded the return. Of course, some returns are so wild that even two men backing up could never hope to stop them.

Therefore you must make it a habit and your bounden duty **to move at once, directly the ball has been hit**, into the position of backing up, if there is the slightest chance that the ball may be thrown in to the fielder whom you should be covering. Never be slack and say, "He is **bound** to throw in at the other end." You never know what *may* happen in Cricket. Finally, don't stand **too close** behind your man or the ball will beat you as well as him.

2. **Slip.** In order to be a "specialist" at Slip, you must have a quick eye and a safe pair of hands into which **you let the ball come without snatching at it**. It is important to remember this, because if you snatch at it instead of allowing it **to come to you**, you will probably close your hands too soon and take it on the end of the fingers. Also, as soon as you see the bowler beginning to run up to the wicket, put all ideas out of your head beyond the all-important one, viz. that you must be ready **in case** the ball slithers off the edge of the bat and comes to you. If you are fielding in front of the wicket, *e.g.* at Mid-off or Cover-point, you can see the batsman shaping to hit the ball in your direction. You can also see from your position at Slip that he is going to *try* to hit the off ball of a good length past one of the fielders in front, but you cannot tell for

certain that he will get his left foot far enough across and that he will not hit the ball on the edge. So it is for the batsman's *mistakes* that you have to be prepared; and as he *might* make one almost any ball, you cannot afford to relax your attention for a second, since you are closer to the wicket than the majority of fielders, and have, therefore, much less time to see the ball coming.

If you examine a score sheet closely, you will notice that the greater number of batsmen who are caught, are dismissed by those who field **behind the wicket**. This is especially the fate of those who are caught before they have made any score worth talking about. Now it is far easier to get a batsman out when he first comes in than when he has been batting for half an hour or so. When he starts his innings, he is, as we have said, nervous and inclined to be over-anxious. He feels rather strange to his surroundings and has not quite got a "sight" of the ball. It is for this reason that a fast bowler is often put on when a new batsman comes in. A medium-pace bowler, who is merely bowling a "length," may give the batsman the opportunity to "play himself in." When the fast bowler comes on is the time when Slip will probably get a chance; but as has been said before, that chance may come at *any* time, and if Slip is unprepared he will

drop it. That piece of inattention may cost his side the match. A bowler is often put to field at Slip, because he will not have to chase the ball during his period of rest, but unless he has some qualification as a Slip fielder, it is far better to put him at Mid-off and to keep your *specialist* for this important position.

Of course, as a Slip you must use your head as to where you will stand. It would be obviously wrong to stand as close in to a fast bowler as you would to a slow one. Again, much depends upon the pace of the pitch. If it is fast, you will need to stand further back than if it were slow. Your Captain and the bowler should, however, see to this; but remember that when you have been placed as they want, **don't alter your position**. A Slip fielder **must stand still**, with legs slightly apart and knees bent—with the head forward and fingers **pointing down** rather than up.

3. **Third Man.** In a sense this is not a very enviable position, because on so many occasions Third man stands right back on the boundary, and his main object is to save fours and prevent the batsman from running twos. He cannot possibly save singles off a fast bowler, owing to the distance he is standing from the wicket. On the other hand, he does sometimes have the chance of running a

batsman out, if he is attempting a risky second run. Therefore, he must be a good thrower and also quick at running in to meet the ball.

But when a slower bowler is on, his position becomes more difficult. He is not then right back in order to stop boundaries and save twos. He is there to save singles. Now it is not always easy for batsmen to decide when there is a run to Third man and when there is not. Sometimes you hear **both** batsmen calling. This is a mistake, of course, and it should be arranged beforehand whether the striker shall call for hits to Third man, or whether his partner shall decide. According to *rule*, it should be the striker's *partner*, for Third man stands behind the wicket and it is probably at the Wicket-keeper's end, towards which the partner is running, that the ball will be returned; though, of course, this depends upon circumstances. On the other hand, the striker can often tell by the *feel* of how he has hit the ball if it is safe to run or not, and he may be in a better position to decide. So it is often arranged that the *striker* shall call.

You will understand, therefore, that there is a possibility of a muddle—the striker calls “Yes” and his partner “No”—they both look at each other—one goes back, the other runs on. Meanwhile, if Third man has kept his head, he has thrown

in at the right end, and there is one batsman less for the bowlers to bother about.

4. **Mid-off.** To field at Mid-off you want lots of courage and a good pair of hard hands. Your duty will be largely to stop hard straight drives along the ground, off the middle of the bat, and catch those which come at you like a cannon ball. But you must also be able to move about quickly to right or left, in order to pick up **with either hand** those hits which the batsman has *pushed* at in his forward strokes. Sometimes when the bowler delivers an over of "length" balls on the off stump, you will merely have to pick up each one and throw the ball to the bowler.

But if you get a batsman who can *drive*, *i.e.* one who stands in the old-fashioned way and who does not stand "wide open," look out! You will be wise then to stand back a bit—especially if the wicket is fast, and also if you happen to be a resting bowler who will be wanted later on.

You must remember, too, **to back up**, *i.e.* cover the bowler, when the ball is hit back a little wide of him. He is off his balance generally, and may quite easily miss it.

5. **Mid-on.** If the wicket is a fast one and the bowlers are keeping a length on or outside the off stump, Mid-on does not get a great deal to do; but

if it is slower, he has more opportunities, for the ball has more "turn" from left to right on it, and is therefore played more often on the leg side. In what we may call "modern" cricket, where the off-driving is so much neglected in favour of pushes to leg for ones and twos, the leg-side fielders, of course, get more to do than they used, but you are playing (we devoutly hope) the "old-fashioned" cricket, and so you may not be so busy. But in boys' matches the fielders on the "on" or "leg" side *do* get quite a lot to do as a rule, partly because the bowlers are apt to be uncertain in their direction and deliver a lot of balls on the leg side, and partly because it is easier for a boy to hit on that side with a crooked bat, than it is for him to play correct cricket on the off side. Therefore it is good policy to put a good catcher at Mid-on and a good stopper too, for he will have endless opportunities of **backing up** returns made by the various fielders on the off side of the wicket.

6. **In the Country.** Here, at any rate, you have plenty of time for seeing the ball coming to you, and you are not going to get your hands hurt, unless you take a high catch on the end of the fingers. But to be a really good fielder "in the country," *i.e.* the Long-field, you need to be something of a specialist. A fat person who could not run fast and who could

only jerk the ball in, would give so many runs away that he would need to score at least 50 runs when he went in to bat, before he started to *make* runs. So a Deep-fielder requires four important qualifications: (1) he must be fast; (2) he must be a good thrower; (3) he must be a reliable field and an absolutely safe catch; (4) he must be able to judge distances.

Our modern Deep-fields, such as Hendren of Middlesex and Hardinge of Kent, are so safe that when a hard straight drive is made to them, the batsmen just amble to the other end, so certain are they that they cannot get two for it. But all the same it is a golden rule *to run that first run as fast as possible*—you never know when a fielder will fumble it. They aren't *all* Hendrens or Hardinges! When Rhodes first sprang into fame he owed an enormous amount of his success to the catching of Denton on the boundary. In fact, the two formed such a combination that one almost involuntarily associates their names together.

An old Yorkshire cricketer—who now drives the golf ball with the most amazing accuracy—on those rare occasions when he hits it a little too high, but always “most abominably straight” you say (unless you are on the same side as he is!), can still be heard to murmur to himself, “Caught Denton, bowled Rhodes.”

CHAPTER XIX

WICKET-KEEPING

To begin with, a **real** Wicket-keeper is an artist. Moreover, he is the most important of all the fielders, for he has more to do than any others and has to accustom himself to all kinds of bowling—good and bad.

We are talking now of what are called “ Stumpers ” —not those who merely stand behind the wickets and stop balls that come to them—but those who **stand up** to the slow bowlers and take the ball easily and gracefully, ever ready for a chance to stump the batsman should he lift his back foot for a second—and those who, standing back to the fast bowlers, catch the ball regularly—not snatching forward at it—but letting it **come to them** in the same way that a good Slip does.

Now Wicket-keeping is an art in itself, and yet we do not find many boys who are really keen to put on the gloves and try to see if they like it or not. This seems a pity, for unless you have tried a thing how are you to be sure whether you can do it or not ?

PLATE XXIV

WICKET-KEEPING

Position at the Wicket

A. Right

The position speaks for itself. Practically all wicket-keepers start from a crouching attitude, since they are able thus to obtain a better focus of the ball. Also it is easier to raise the body than it is to lower it and yet maintain perfect balance.

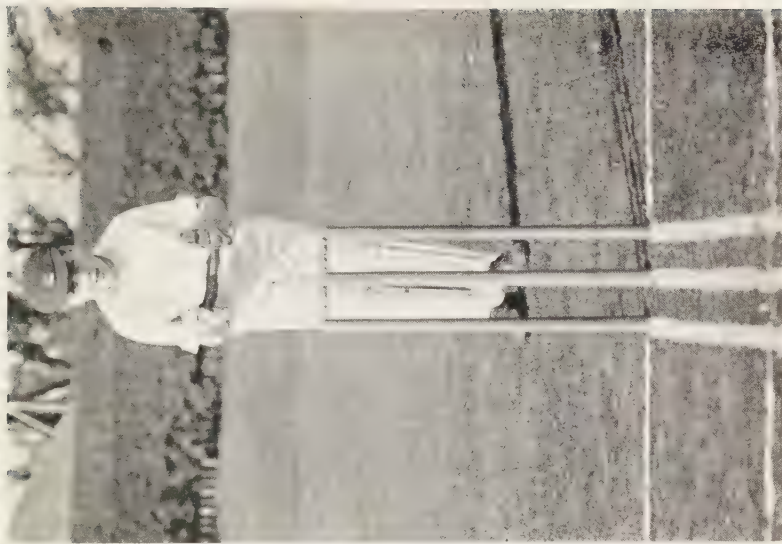
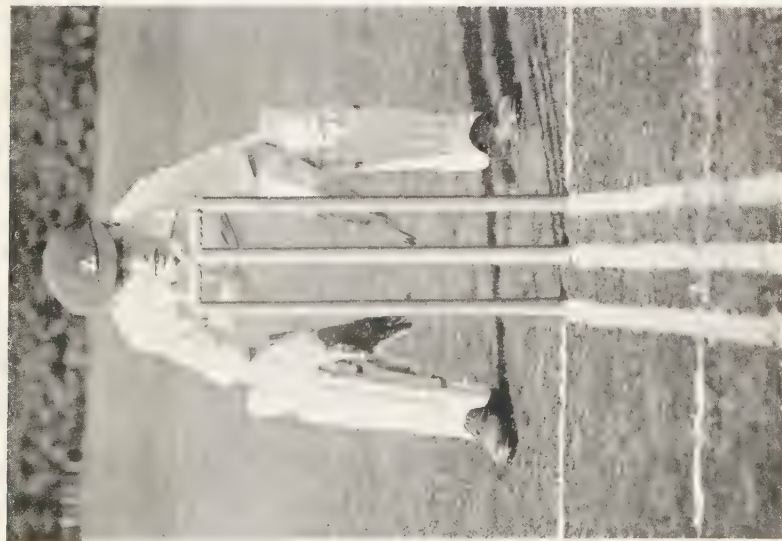
As in batting, the placing of the feet is all important, since a wicket-keeper must not shuffle about any more than a batsman or he will find it quite impossible to sight the ball correctly. At the same time he must be prepared to move across to balls outside the leg stump.

The distance from the stumps at which the wicket-keeper in the picture is standing is the correct one. From where he is, he will be able to whip off the bails and also to let the ball come straight into his hands direct from the bat. In addition, he will command respect from the batsman, who will not dare to take liberties with him.

B. Wrong

This man is plainly a stopgap, who has put on the gloves for the first time in order to relieve the regular wicket-keeper whose hands are bruised!

Look where he is standing to begin with! He will, of course, be unable to stump anyone, since he is too far back, and yet he is *not far enough back* to be able to make a catch—at any rate easily. This is a kind of *half-way* place—neither one nor the other. Next look at his *feet*! How is he going to get down to a low ball without falling over, or again, how is he going to cover a wide ball and so save byes? Finally, notice his *hands*. The ends of the fingers are pointing straight forwards, asking to be bruised or even worse! If you have not kept wicket before, and for some good reason you are asked to fill that difficult position, *stand back* by all means; but go the whole hog and *don't stand half-way*.



1

B

There may be hundreds of *real* Wicket-keepers to-day who have never even bothered to put on the gloves.

Possibly you think it isn't much fun to get a bruised finger which may prevent you from holding a bat. There is certainly something in this, but you will find you will always have to go "through the mill" in most things that you take up, and that you will learn by experience to avoid getting your hands knocked about. Think of Wicket-keepers like Strudwick and Murrell and a host of others, who are playing every day throughout the summer. Their hands last the whole season year after year, though doubtless they have had to learn the lesson of how to do it.

If you are thinking of trying to become a Wicket-keeper, remember the following points:—

1. Take up a position—with the feet apart and the body bent forward—so that **from where you are standing** you can whip off the bails.

2. When the ball arrives at the batsman **don't take a step back**. If you do this, how can you whip off the bails without stepping forward again? You may **go across**, however, to a ball wide of the leg stump.

3. **Don't snatch at the ball**—try to let it come into your hands before you close them.

4. Hold the fingers *down*. If they are held straight the ball may hit the ends and you may dislocate or break a finger.

5. If you are standing back, always **run up** to the wicket and get behind it as soon as the batsmen start to run, so as to be ready for the throw-in.

6. Always use **both hands** whenever possible.

7. Be ready to run forward and pick the ball up—especially when it is hit a short distance on the leg side. Don't take it for granted that someone else will get it.

CHAPTER XX

FIELDING

Some Additional Hints on Fielding

HAVING learnt something about a few of the most important positions in the field, we will finish with a few hints of a **general** nature.

By advising you to practise your fielding whenever you have a chance—an equally keen friend and a ball are all that you want—we have said in so many words that you can **make** yourself a reliable field and a safe catch at any rate, even if you are not gifted with a very quick eye and the natural instinct. At any moment in a game or match you may be a very important factor in the success of your side—a catch made, a boundary saved, a run-out as the result of a good throw-in—there are endless possibilities of helping your side to win. When, therefore, you practise your fielding, take it all in deadly earnest. Try to keep a mental record of possible catches missed, of “fields” fumbled and badly returned. **Get your legs behind** the ball; keep your head and also the tips of your fingers **down** and **watch the**

ball into the hands ; **don't grab** at it before it is there. If the ball is coming slowly towards you, **run in and meet** it, in the same way that deep Third man does when he is trying to save two. Throw in a long hop, or better still, a low skimming catch—**half-volleys or yorkers are useless**. Never throw in very hard when there is no necessity for it ; you want your bowler's hands and fingers to be saved as much as possible. In the same way try and spare your bowler any unnecessary exertion, such as having to stoop for the ball. Therefore return him a long hop or a lobbed catch, and **don't roll it to him along the ground**. Try to "nurse" him in every way—your's is an easy job compared with his. Remember to back up everything within reason. Don't get in another man's way—but it is your duty to move directly the stroke is made, so that you may cover the man you are backing up. Don't get a yard or so behind him, because at so close a distance, if *he* misses it so will you. Stand 6 or 8 yards or even more behind him.

When you get a catch try to get **both hands** to it. It doesn't count any more if you make a catch with one hand, and you are far less likely to miss it if you use two.¹ Try to get into position before the

¹ Many "Slip" catches are, however, easier to make with one hand.

catch comes to you; a really good catcher often makes a difficult catch look quite easy, by getting into position quickly and so being quite still while he makes it. Allow the hands to “give” a little when you catch the ball; if you hold them stiff, it is quite likely that the ball will come out again; you won’t recover it before it touches the ground if it does. When you are shaping for a high catch, don’t point the fingers at the sky; keep them in a **horizontal** position and overlapping. Try to catch a high one with your hands **level with your chest**; it is a much more comfortable and also safer position in which to hold the ball.

Lastly, when you are fielding, always watch the batsman closely. You will find you will soon begin to **anticipate the strokes** which should be made off certain balls. You will be the first to dash in and save a short run; you will unconsciously put life and energy into those of your fellow-fielders who are feeling tired and listless; you will help to establish a tradition for good fielding at your School; you will, in a word, be worth your place on the side for **your fielding alone**.

CHAPTER XXI

DO'S AND DON'TS

(1) **When Batting**

- Do* (1) put the left foot well up to the bat. If you don't, you lose balance and power and many extra runs.
- Do* (2) play with as straight a bat as possible when you know you should.
- Do* (3) take the bat back as straight as you can. A flourish or a faulty back stroke puts every shot out of gear.
- Do* (4) get your left shoulder well forward in a line with the ball.
- Do* (5) call "Yes," "No," or "Wait," when it is your call.
- Do* (6) play yourself in before having a risky "go." You will get a sight of the ball in an over or two.
- Do* (7) play for your side all the time. Ten runs in half an hour are often worth ten times as much as twenty in ten minutes, or *vice versa*.

- Do* (8) get to the pitch of the ball if you are going to have a "go," and hit straight and as hard as you can.
- Do* (9) run the first run as fast as possible. You can often get a second one by doing this.
- Do* (10) ground your bat when you are running in. You can gain a full yard in this way.
- Do* (11) watch the bowler's hand as he delivers the ball and keep your eye on the ball all the time.

When Batting

- Don't* (1) make up your mind, before the ball has been bowled, what sort of shot you are going to play.
- Don't* (2) think it is "time you hit another four." You will only blame yourself on your way back to the Pavilion.
- Don't* (3) say "Will you?" when it is your call. This confuses your partner who is expecting a decision from you.
- Don't* (4) play "cow" shots. They are fatal in nine cases out of ten.
- Don't* (5) get impatient at not scoring. Wait till the right ball to hit comes along; you probably won't have to wait long.

- Don't* (6) run down the middle of the pitch or cross your partner. You may spoil the wicket for the rest of your side.
- Don't* (7) hit with a flat bat at balls pitched up on the leg side.
- Don't* (8) move the right foot back when making a forward stroke.
- Don't* (9) kneel down or bend the left knee too much when playing forward.
- Don't* (10) run away. Many fours are lost in this way; you may also be bowled off your legs.
- Don't* (11) call "Yes" when you cannot see the ball.
- Don't* (12) call "Yes" just because you have hit the ball hard. It may be going straight to the fielder.
- Don't* (13) play forward or back with a crooked bat.
- Don't* (14) throw your head back when making forward strokes.
- Don't* (15) put your left leg in front of straight balls, which are well pitched up, in an endeavour to hit them to square leg.
- Don't* (16) go out to bat without gloves.

(2) When Bowling

Do (1) keep your arm up. It will make all the difference to the "life" in your bowling.

Do (2) always bowl straight and well up to a new batsman. He is just as anxious not to make "o" as you are to get him out. A full pitch to leg or a short ball are what he is hoping for.

Do (3) use your head. To "serve up anything" is not likely to get a batsman out.

Do (4) pitch the ball up. Thus you will make the batsman play at the "blind" spot, whereas he can step back and watch the short ones.

Do (5) always bowl well within yourself, *i.e.* do not try to bowl faster than you can. Otherwise you will lose length and direction and many runs for your side.

Do (6) try to bowl at least five balls in every over with the object of hitting the wicket.

When Bowling

Don't (1) bowl before your fieldsmen are in position.

Don't (2) bowl to leg if you can avoid it. It means runs or byes to the opposite side; also it may injure your wicket-keeper.

- Don't* (3) play tricks with your run up to the wicket. You lose step if you do and will experience a lack of confidence.
- Don't* (4) think you can't get a batsman out. It should be a struggle between you and him all the time.
- Don't* (5) blame a fielder if he misses a catch. It is very disheartening for you, of course, but he has not done it on purpose, and to blame him may make him miss another.
- Don't* (6) show the batsman you are going to bowl a slow or a fast one. A cleverly disguised ball is a very dangerous one.
- Don't* (7) try "fancy actions." Your own probably suit you best.
- Don't* (8) try to persuade your Captain to give you "just one more over" unless you have a particular reason for so doing.
- Don't* (9) ever give up trying. It demoralises your whole side and gives the batsman confidence.
- Don't* (10) bowl slackly in practice. You will never get your length nor use the proper muscles if you do.

(3) When Fielding

Do (1) be on your toes all the time, even if there is the temptation to take things easily. You cannot start properly unless you are alert.

Do (2) back up everything. Even if there is a probability that the ball will not be thrown in at your end, it is your duty to move directly the stroke is made, so that you may cover the man you are backing up.

Do (3) move quickly when and where your Captain tells you. He has a lot to think about in order to get the best out of his side, and a slovenly fielder may easily spoil an XI.

Do (4) keep the tips of the fingers of both hands down when meeting the ball.

Do (5) try to get into position before a catch arrives, so that you can, if possible, be standing still when you make it.

Do (6) allow the hands to "give" a little when you make the catch, so as to allow it as small a chance as possible of bouncing out again.

Do (7) get your legs behind the ball.

Do (8) try to throw in a quick return from Cover-point by keeping the throwing hand under the shoulder. This saves much time, but it requires a great deal of practice.

Do (9) run in to meet a ball which is coming slowly towards you. Don't wait for it to reach you.

Do (10) walk in a few paces as the bowler delivers the ball, if you happen to be fielding at Cover or Extra-cover. This will ensure your being "on your toes."

When Fielding

Don't (1) move from the place where your Captain has placed you, even though a ball may have beaten you by 4 or 5 yards.

Don't (2) get slack or sloppy in the field. You never know when you may win a match for your side by stopping a four or making a catch, etc.

Don't (3) throw the ball in to the bowler along the ground. It is an effort to him to pick it up, and he has quite enough hard work to do.

Don't (4) throw in half-volleys. Long hops or catches are best.

- Don't* (5) throw in unnecessarily hard, *i.e.* when there is no occasion for it. You may damage your bowler's hands or give away overthrows.
- Don't* (6) appeal for l.b.w. when you cannot possibly see.
- Don't* (7) point the fingers at the sky when you are shaping for a high catch. Keep the hands in a horizontal position and overlapping.
- Don't* (8) grab at the ball before it reaches you. Let it come into your hands and watch it until it gets there.
- Don't* (9) back up only a yard or so behind the man you are covering. Stand at least 6 or 8 yards or more from him.
- Don't* (10) try one-handed catching when two hands would be safer. "Gallery" catches don't count any more than safe ones.

